FOREIGN
BROADCAST
INFORMATION
SERVICE

Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-89-246
Tuesday
26 December 1989

Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-89-246 *26 December 1989*

CONTENTS

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

Syria's al-Shar', PLO's Qaddumi Assess Relations *[Kuwait AL-WATAN 24 Dec]* 1
'Regular' Cairo-Damascus Flights To Begin *[Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH 22 Dec]* 1

Palestinian Affairs

PLO Officials Deny Involvement in Romania Events *[INA]* 1
Palestinians Not Fighting in Romania *[INA]* 2
Jordanian Paper Carries PLO Reply to Baker Plan *[Amman JORDAN TIMES 23 Dec]* 2
Hurani: PLO Firm on Publicly Naming Talks Team *[Amman JORDAN TIMES 23 Dec]* 3
'Arafat: U.S. 'Hampering' Mideast Peace Efforts *[Baghdad VOP]* 4
Qaddumi Comments on Palestinian-U.S. Dialogue *[Baghdad PLO]* 4
PLO Denies Role in Amal-Hizballah Fighting *[Algiers VOP]* 4
Salah Khalaf Views Sidon Incident, Syria Ties *[Kuwait AL-ANBA' 19 Dec]* 4
PLO Official on Amman Talks, 'Pressures' on PLO *[Amman AL-DUSTUR 23 Dec]* 5

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

FLN Central Committee Continues To Meet 6
President Addresses Session *[Algiers Radio]* 6
Mehri, Political Bureau Elected *[Algiers TV]* 6
Communique Stresses Reforms *[Algiers TV]* 7

Egypt

Syrian Vice President Khaddam Arrives in Cairo *[MENA]* 7
Khaddam's Arrival Remarks *[Damascus Radio]* 7
Early Meeting With Mubarak Planned *[Cairo Radio]* 8
Meets With President Mubarak *[MENA]* 8
Khaddam-Sidqi News Conference *[MENA]* 8
Concludes Brief Visit, Departs *[MENA]* 10
Yasir 'Arafat Arrives in Cairo for Talks *[MENA]* 10
Meets With 'Abd-al-Majid *[MENA]* 10
Comments on Meeting *[MENA]* 10
Leaves for Baghdad 25 Dec *[MENA]* 10
French Prime Minister Arrives on Private Visit *[MENA]* 10
Comments on Warsaw Pact, Romania *[MENA]* 10
'Abd-al-Majid: Medical Aid to Romania Planned *[Cairo Radio]* 11

Libya

Reported Involvement in Romanian Events Denied *[JANA]* 11
Spokesman Repeats Denial *[JANA]* 11
Romanian Embassy Supports Downfall of Ceausescu *[JANA]* 11
Al-Qadhdhafi Receives Message From USSR on Panama *[Tripoli Radio]* 12
Noriega Appeal Highlights Failure to Combat U.S. *[JANA]* 12

Sudan

SPLA Spokesman Denies Downing of French Plane *[Radio SPLA]* 12

U.S., UK Envoys Briefed on Nairobi Talks *[Omdurman Radio]* 13
Contacts Held for Talks in Cairo With Rebels 13
Foreign Minister on Talks *[Omdurman Radio]* 13
Interior Minister on Contacts *[Omdurman Radio]* 13

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Bahrain

King Fahd Arrives in Manama on Private Visit *[WAKH]* 14

Kuwait

PRC President Yang Shangkun Arrives for Visit *[Kuwait Radio]* 14
Holds Talks With Amir *[KUNA]* 14
Romanian Ambassador Supports Salvation Front *[KUNA]* 14

Oman

Fahd, Qabus Agree To Delimit Border *[Muscat Radio]* 14
Fahd Departs 23 Dec *[Muscat Radio]* 15

PDRY

ANA Issues Statement on Events in Romania *[Aden Radio]* 15

IRAQ

INA Receives Romanian Front 'Official Statement' 16
Romanian Embassy Supports 'Uprising' *[INA]* 16
Foreign Minister Returns From France 23 Dec *[INA]* 17
Jordan's Prince Hasan Arrives on Visit 24 Dec *[INA]* 17
Received by President Saddam *[Baghdad Radio]* 17
Saddam Receives Egypt's 'Abd-al-Majid 25 Dec *[INA]* 17
Press Comments on Israel-Iran Deal, U.S. Role *[INA]* 17
Statement Endorsing Nuclear Treaty Issued *[INA]* 18
National Assembly Approves 1990 State Budget *[INA]* 19
Further on State Budget *[WAKH]* 19

ISRAEL

Paratroopers Raid 'Terrorist' Targets in Lebanon *[Jerusalem Radio]* 20
IDF Spokesman Releases Details *[Jerusalem Radio]* 20
All Planes Return Safely After Raid North of Sidon *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 20
Rabin Denies 'Direct Contacts' With Iran *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 20
Reportage on Reaction to Events in Romania 20
State To Send Humanitarian Aid *[Jerusalem Radio]* 20
Arens Urges 'Extreme Caution' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 21
Organizations To Send Aid *[Jerusalam Radio]* 21
Arens Adviser 'Welcomes' Regime *[Jerusalem Radio]* 21
Foreign Ministry Defends Statement *[THE JERUSALEM POST 25 Dec]* 21
Attack on Embassy in Bucharest Denied *[Jerusalem Radio]* 22
Arens on Recognition of Government *[Jerusalem Radio]* 22
Envoy on Contacts With New Government *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 22
Peres Postpones USSR Visit; No New Date Set *[Jerusalem Radio]* 22
U.S. 'Double Standards' on Panama, Palestine *[HADASHOT 22 Dec]* 23
3 Dead in Territories; Hamas Cancels Strike *[Jerusalem Radio]* 23
Court Sentences 'Terrorist' for Throwing Grenade *[Jerusalem Radio]* 23
AL-FAJR Editor Makes 'Surprise Visit' to Jordan *['AL HAMISHMAR 24 Dec]* 23

JORDAN

House Approves Cables on U.S. Move in Panama *[Amman Radio]* 24
Denounces U.S. 'Intervention' *[Amman Radio]* 24
Al-Masri Tables Proposal *[JORDAN TIMES 25 Dec]* 24
USIA Magazine, U.S. Panama Involvement Attacked *[AL-RA'Y 25 Dec]* 25
Romanian Ambassador Joins Rally To Back Revolt *[JORDAN TIMES 25 Dec]* 25
Foreign Minister Returns From Euro-Arab Parley *[Amman Radio]* 26
Hasan Returns After Delivering Message to Saddam *[PETRA-JNA]* 26

LEBANON

Amal, Hizballah Fighters Clash in Iqlim al-Tuffah 27
Clashes Begin 23 Dec *[Beirut Radio]* 27
Amal 'Offensive' Contained *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 27
5 Killed, 35 Wounded *[RFL]* 27
Amal, Hizballah Statements *[Voice of National Resistance]* 27
Hizballah Controls '90 Percent' of Area *[RFL]* 27
Qabalan on Syrian Involvement *[RFL]* 28
Iran's Besharati To Mediate *[Beirut Radio]* 28
Fighting Resumes 24 Dec *[RFL]* 28
Hizballah Issues Cease-Fire Statement *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 28
Intermittent Shelling Continues *[Beirut Radio]* 29
Amal, Hizballah Trade Accusations *[Voice of National Resistance]* 29
Cease-Fire Reportedly Takes Hold *[IRNA]* 29
'Intensity' of Fighting Abates *[Beirut Radio]* 29
Palestinians Said Aiding Hizballah *[VOL]* 29
Amal Issues Statement *[Beirut Radio]* 30
Fadlallah Urges End to Fighting *[RFL]* 30
Israeli Commandos Raid LCP Position in East 30
Al-Nabi Safi Attacked; Casualties Noted *[Voice of the People]* 30
Further on Casualties, Fighting *[AFP]* 30
Amal Radio on Raid *[Voice of National Resistance]* 31
Israeli Force Withdraws *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 31
'Awn Compares Situation to That of Romanian Army *[The Lebanese Radio]* 31
Sa'adah Discloses French Proposal for Settlement *[VOL]* 31
'Secret Report' on French Arms Supplies to 'Awn *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 31

SYRIA

Official Denies Involvement in Romanian Events *[SANA]* 33
Reportage on Visit of Iran's 'Ali Besharati 33
Meets Al-Shar' 24 Dec *[SANA]* 33
IRNA on Al-Shar' Meeting *[IRNA]* 33
Meets Al-Asad *[Damascus Radio]* 33
Conveys Message to Al-Asad *[IRNA]* 33
Vice President Khaddam Departs for Cairo 23 Dec *[SANA]* 33
Spokesman Rules Out Mubarak Visit to Damascus *[Amman Radio]* 33
Al-Asad To Hold 'Very Important' Talks in Moscow *[Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD 20 Dec]* 33

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

End to U.S. 'Aggression' in Panama Demanded *[BAKHTAR]* 34
Jordanian Sentenced to 20 Years for Spying *[AFP]* 34
Islamabad Radio Notes Heavy Fighting in Provinces 34
'Fierce Fighting' Continues *[Islamabad Radio]* 34

Bangladesh

Ershad Reshuffles Cabinet; 4 Ministers Dropped *[AFP]* 34
New Portfolios Listed *[Dhaka Radio]* 35

India

Vorontsov Delivers Gorbachev's Letter to Singh *[Delhi Radio]* 35
Singh: Bofors Debarred From Future Contracts *[Delhi Radio]* 35
BJP Urges Government Not To Accept IMF Loans *[Delhi Radio]* 36
Naxalites Kidnap Andhra Pradesh Legislator *[Delhi Radio]* 36
Prime Minister Comments *[Delhi Radio]* 36
Kidnappers Make Fresh Demand *[Delhi Radio]* 36
Violence Continues in Kashmir; Curfew Reimposed *[Delhi Radio]* 36
'Cross Firing' in Srinagar 25 Dec *[Delhi TV]* 37

Iran

Emami-Kashani Denounces U.S. Panama Operation *[Tehran International]* 37
Reaction to U.S 'Invasion' of Panama Continues 37
Majles Speaker Condemns Move *[Tehran Radio]* 37
Karrubi Regrets Vatican Endorsement *[Tehran Radio]* 38
Anti-U.S. 'Ceremonies' Planned *[Tehran Radio]* 38
Tehran Residents Urged To Attend *[Tehran TV]* 38
KEYHAN Denounces Invasion, Bush *[IRNA]* 38
Commentary Condemns U.S. Operation *[Tehran Radio]* 39
Reaction, Commentary on Romanian Situation 39
Velayati on Ceausescu Visit *[IRNA]* 39
National Salvation Front Recognized *[Tehran Radio]* 40
Report on Nationals Fighting Denied *[IRNA]* 40
ETTELA'AT Demands 'Explanation' *[IRNA]* 40
TEHRAN TIMES 'Volte-Face' Noted *[IRNA]* 40
Daily Says Visit 'Mistake' *[IRNA]* 41
KEYHAN Criticizes 'Erroneous' Visit *[IRNA]* 41
Envoy to Romania 'Sacked' *[AFP]* 41
Bank Denies Holding Ceausescu's Gold *[IRNA]* 42
Besharati Departs for Talks in Damascus *[IRNA]* 42
Government To Release 50 More Iraqi POW's *[IRNA]* 42
TEHRAN TIMES Details Majles Election Results *[17 Dec]* 42

Sri Lanka

Tamil Army Accuses UK, Colombo of Backing Rivals *[AFP]* 43
Communique Issued on Security Forces Operations *[LANKAPUVATH]* 43
EPRLF Cadres Assault Catholic Church Leader *[LANKAPUVATH]* 44
Police Arrest Colombo District JVP Leader *[LANKAPUVATH]* 44
'Over 40' Killed in Tamil Group Clashes *[Delhi Radio]* 44
500 Prisoners Freed To Mark Christmas Day *[LANKAPUVATH]* 44

Inter-Arab Affairs

Syria's al-Shar', PLO's Qaddumi Assess Relations

JN2512163189 Kuwait AL-WATAN in Arabic 24 Dec 89 p 21

[By Jamil Hatmal in Paris]

[Text] Syrian and Palestinian Foreign Ministers Faruq al-Shar' and Faruq Qaddumi, currently in Paris to attend the Euro-Arab dialogue conference, were at one in their evaluation of the outcome of the conference but gave two different opinions on the current shape of Syrian-Palestinian relations.

This came in separate statements to AL-WATAN on the sidelines of the dialogue conference in Paris. Assessing the results of the conference, the Syrian minister said that these were positive and that the atmosphere was good. Asked about the sanctions that the EC is imposing on Syria and Libya, a question not discussed in the conference, the Syrian foreign minister said: A number of Arab ministers asked the EC to lift the measures against Syria and Libya. The head of the European side, Roland Dumas, took note of this and promised that the subject will be discussed at the first EC meeting.

Asked whether Syria made certain proposals on the issue, the Syrian minister said: "No, we did not. The issue was only brought up by some Arab ministers." Asked to evaluate Syrian-Palestinian relations, he literally described them as "normal," with nothing new. Asked about the visit Faruq Qaddumi reportedly intended to make to Damascus, al-Shar' said the visit had been agreed on in the past and that he does not know how things stand today. Asked whether he met with the Palestinian official during the Paris conference, al-Shar' said: There was a meeting, and there will be another meeting today at Qaddumi's request. Asked whether he expects a positive outcome to the meeting, he said he could not make predictions before the meeting actually took place.

The Syrian minister declined to answer a question on his assessment of the current dramatic developments in Romania.

For his part, Palestinian Foreign Minister Faruq Qaddumi said about the Arab-European dialogue, "it is undoubtedly successful."

On Syrian-Palestinian relations, Qaddumi said: "Yes, there is something new, and, God willing, there will be advanced steps with the convening of certain Syrian-Palestinian meetings."

On the conditions and demands the Palestinian side had set in the past for a dialogue with Syria, Qaddumi said that this issue was not discussed, as the meeting was short. All pending issues could be discussed in any expanded official meeting, he said. Asked whether there are new Palestinian conditions for the dialogue, Qaddumi said: "There are no conditions between brothers, but the brothers should take into consideration pressing issues and requirements as they are committed to the Palestine question in accordance with the resolutions of the Arab summits."

Asked about the date of his expected visit to Syria, he said the visit will take place soon. Asked whether he was officially invited, he told AL-WATAN: "We do not need an official invitation to visit any Arab country."

'Regular' Cairo-Damascus Flights To Begin

JN2312184189 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 22 Dec 89 p 1

[By Hasan al-Rashidi]

[Text] Regular Syrian Airlines flights from Damascus to Cairo will begin on 29 December 1989. Egypt Air flights from Cairo to Damascus will begin on the following day.

Mamduh 'Abd-al-Qadir, head of Egypt Air's commercial department, has stated that Syrian Airlines will make three regular flights per week on Friday, Sunday, and Tuesday, while Egypt Air's flights will be made on Saturday, Monday, and Thursday.

It was also agreed to apply the international pricing system to passenger tickets and to give the appropriate discount to tourist groups. Each of the companies will provide services for the other at Cairo and Damascus airports.

Palestinian Affairs

PLO Officials Deny Involvement in Romania Events

JN2412134089 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1315 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 24 Dec (INA)—A senior Palestinian official has strongly denied reports carried by the Zionist enemy radio alleging Palestinian participation by siding with the Romanian security organization that supports Ceausescu.

At a news conference here today, PLO Executive Committee Member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh said that the Palestinians support the Romanian people's struggle for democracy and the forces of change in Romania.

He announced that 4,000 Palestinian students pursuing studies in Romania may have been subjected to criminal acts by the former repressive organization like the rest of the Romanian people.

He added that ties between the Zionist government and Romania were always strong and that the Romanian secret security organization, which was the striking force of Ceausescu's government, was supervised by Zionist experts and that officers of that organization were trained in the Zionist entity and use Zionist weapons.

The PLO Executive Committee member said that the security organization is committing massacres against

tens of thousands of Romanians and urged the new Romanian Government to make public all documents on cooperation between the Zionist Mosad and the Romanian secret police. [passage omitted]

Palestinians Not Fighting in Romania

JN2412165289 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1620 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Tunis, 24 Dec (INA)—The PLO has categorically denied that Palestinians are taking part in the current fighting in Romania between the secret police supporting the deposed president, Nicolae Ceausescu, and the Armed Forces that support the National Salvation Front.

A Palestinian information source today asserted that what is going on in Romania is an internal matter that concerns the Romanian people alone. He denied Radio Free Europe reports that Palestinians are taking part in the ongoing fighting in Romania. He described these news as false and designed to involve the Palestinian leadership in things that are none of its business.

Jordanian Paper Carries PLO Reply to Baker Plan

JN2312081989 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 23 Dec 89 p 1

[Text] The following is an official translation of the PLO's reply to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's five-point proposal for an opening round of Palestinian-Israeli dialogue. The reply was conveyed to the U.S. government, via the Egyptian government, and the American ambassador in Tunis, Robert Pelletreau, on Dec. 1, 1989:

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leadership studied the replies it received on Nov. 16 and Nov. 27/1989 via the Egyptian Foreign Ministry from Mr. James Baker, the U.S. secretary of state, in response to Palestinian queries about his plan which he put forward Nov. 6, 1989.

1. It is unfortunate that the (American) response ignores, right from the very beginning, the role of the PLO in forming the Palestinian delegation to the dialogue. (It) even completely denies the existence of the PLO by referring to "major and influenial" Palestinian forces which would name the delegation. Where are these forces? On what basis has the American administration been holding a dialogue with the PLO since December 1989 [as published]?

2. The American administration denies that Israel will have a veto power on names of the Palestinian delegation, but stresses that it will not pressure Israel to accept to talk with those it does not want to.

Stemming from the principle of equality, the PLO reiterates that it is not the right of any party to intervene, directly or indirectly, in the process of the formation of the (the PLO) delegation.

3. The American response concerning the dialogue's agenda contravenes what has been agreed upon between Egypt, Sweden, and the U.S. This (reply) constitutes an American concession to Israeli conditions to confine the agenda to elections and negotiate its procedures. We would like to refer here to the declaration made by U.S. President George Bush stressing the need to end the Israeli occupation, and to the statement issued by Baker calling on Israel to drop its great dream of expansion and annexation.

4. The PLO was notified of the U.S. administration's commitment to the statement made by former secretary of State George Shultz on Sept. 16, 1988.

5. The American response referred to an international peace conference on the basis of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. Taking into consideration that the Palestinian-Israeli dialogue is part of the preparatory process for the international peace conference, the PLO assumes that international sponsorship should include this dialogue.

6. The second American response, dated Nov. 27, completely ignored the minutes of the Egyptian-Swedish, American meeting which took place at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry on Sept. 16, 1989, and what we were officially notified at that meeting, of concerning [as published] international sponsorship and the PLO's right to name the Palestinian delegation and the open agenda.

7. The U.S. administration's insistence that the dialogue be confined to the agenda to elections and to negotiations over its procedures—in response to the Israeli government's plan—contravenes what we were notified (by the American administration) regarding its commitment to the statement made by Shultz which contained a reference to open agenda for the dialogue and the right of the Palestinians and any other party to raise any issue, including the Palestinian demand for an independent Palestinian state.

8. We wonder: Does the U.S. administration realise that no Palestinian delegation would be able to come to the negotiating table without being named and declared by the PLO? What would be the compulsory means deployed to bring any Palestinian outside this framework?

The PLO, referring to the Palestinian peace strategy and the Arab Casablanca summit resolutions, would like to reiterate willingness to seriously contribute to the international efforts exerted to push the peace process forward.

Stemming from this the PLO can accept to deal with Baker's plan, put forward on Nov. 6, only according to resolutions endorsed by the PLO Central Council (held last October) as following:

a. Its readiness to conduct a dialogue between a delegation from the PLO, representing the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied Palestinian land, and an Israeli delegation.

b. The dialogue's agenda should be open and without prior preconditions and each delegation should be able to raise any issues, including elections in the occupied

territories and the Egyptian-proposed 10 points, in accordance to Shultz' statement issued Sept. 16, 1988.

c. The dialogue would be conducted under the auspices of the United Nations and the five permanent members of the Security Council, Egypt and Sweden.

d. The dialogue should be a preliminary step towards the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East which should convene under the auspices of the United Nations and on the basis of international legitimacy and (U.N.) resolutions, and will be attended by the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and all the parties concerned, including the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Hurani: PLO Firm on Publicly Naming Talks Team

JN2312083989 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 23 Dec 89 pp 1,3

[By Lamis K. Andoni, JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) has no intention of delivering to Egypt a list of names of members of a Palestinian delegation to take part in a proposed Palestinian-Israeli dialogue, and insists on publicly naming the team, according to a senior Palestinian official.

PLO executive member 'Abdallah Hurani said the organisation was asked to convey the names of the Palestinian delegation to Cairo, which would have delivered them to the American government. "But the PLO will not deliver a list of names to Egypt or any other third party," said Hurani. "If there will be a Palestinian-Israeli dialogue, the organisation will name the delegation publicly," Hurani, who left Amman to Cairo Thursday night to convey the PLO position to the Egyptian government, told the Jordan Times.

Hurani said the PLO perceives a real danger in allowing any party or government to name the Palestinian delegation. According to a plan put forward by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, the American, Israeli and Egyptian foreign ministers should meet to organise an opening session of Palestinian-Israeli talks. Palestinian officials said that the U.S. did not expect the PLO to play a direct role in the process, and that its part would be confined to "confidentially" advising Egypt on the names.

They said that even if the PLO was to deliver a list of names, its role should remain invisible and indirect, according to the U.S. scenario. But Hurani said that the PLO was not accepting such conditions, which pose a "threat" to the organisation's role. "We cannot accept these conditions because the party that will name the delegation can be the party which will change the delegation and set its position," Hurani said.

The PLO official said that dangers of authorising a Palestinian delegation, which would not have a public link with the PLO, include the possibility of creating duplicity in the representation of the Palestinian people. "Nominally and publicly at least, it would appear as if there are two Palestinian leaderships. The PLO just cannot accept to allow the creation of a substitute to the organisation or to Yasir 'Arafat," he said.

He said there was also the possibility that the suggested delegation would be seen as a separate body and treated as such. "How would then the Arab states treat the delegation and the PLO? Would the Arab governments start receiving the delegation and, if so, in what capacity? As the representative of the Palestinian people?" he asked. "It should be clear that any delegation would be part of and would represent the PLO and not a separate entity," he stressed.

Hurani, who accompanied 'Arafat on an official visit to Jordan last week, said the PLO was going to convey to the Egyptian government the organisation's insistence on publicly naming the delegation.

On Thursday, reports from Israel indicated that the tripartite foreign ministerial meeting of the U.S., Egypt and Israel which is expected to take place in Washington next month might be postponed.

But, Hurani said that the PLO would make it clear to Egypt that it would not budge on its conditions for the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue.

The PLO has accepted to deal with the Baker's plan provided it retains a central and direct role in the process.

Hurani who took part in drafting the PLO's reply to Baker's plan, said that there were three conditions that the PLO would strongly adhere to:

—First, the PLO should name and announce the delegation.
—Second, the Palestinian people's right to self-determination will be part of the agenda.
—Third, there would be an international sponsorhsip of the dialogue.

In an interview with Israel Television Thursday evening, Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens said the proposed Israeli-Palestinian dialogue would focus on the Israeli plan for holding elections in the Israeli occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. "We do not accept to deal with the issues as that of a stateless people," Arens said.

Hurani said that the PLO wanted a prior agreement on agenda. "The basis of the dialogue should be agreed upon in advance," he said.

Palestinian sources told the Jordan Times that the PLO was asked to accept to remain "invisible" in the first stages of the peace process, and to play a bigger role only after the proposed elections in the occupied territories.

Hurani said the PLO rejects such suggestions and insists on a full-fledged role right from the beginning of the dialogue. "We want a full fole in all states of the peace process, starting from the very beginning," he said.

Arens said Thursday he thought he and Baker and Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid seemed to be approaching an agreement which they met last month in New York. PLO officials have said that the organisation would not be obliged to accept the outcome of the tripartite meeting or any agreement if it contravened with its stipulations.

"It is true we have accepted an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, but our dealing with Baker's plan will only be in accordance with our terms for an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue," Hurani said.

'Arafat: U.S. 'Hampering' Mideast Peace Efforts

JN2212070589 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1929 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Brother President leader Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat—FBIS] yesterday chaired a meeting in Amman attended by the PLO Executive Committee members and the Palestine National Council members residing in Jordan. He briefed them on the recent developments pertaining to the efforts being made and the contacts being held to activate the peace process within the context of the proposed initiatives.

Brother President leader Abu-'Ammar also briefed them on the outcome of his talks with King Husayn of Jordan which he described as excellent, constructive, and reflecting the fraternal ties binding Jordan to the PLO. He affirmed the PLO's full right to form a Palestinian delegation to any dialogue during the settlement phase. He also asserted the PLO's readiness to start a dialogue in accordance with the bases spelled out by the PLO Central Council in its recent meetings in Baghdad, provided that the Palestinian-Israeli dialogue constitutes a preliminary step for the convening of an international conference under international auspices and with the participation of the permanent members of the UN Security Council, Egypt, Sweden, and the parties to the conflict.

Brother President leader Abu-'Ammar said that the United States is hampering the regional peace efforts through its bias in favor of the Israeli side. He hailed the heroic steadfastness of our Palestinian people in their confrontation of the occupation and called for providing further support for the blessed intifadah. He also urged solidarity for the intifadah.

Qaddumi Comments on Palestinian-U.S. Dialogue

JN2312205789 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1930 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Excerpts] Twenty-two Arab ministers and 12 EEC ministers yesterday concluded the proceedings of the Arab-European dialogue in Paris. [passage omitted]

Brother Abu-al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi], head of the PLO Political Department, yesterday delivered a speech in the opening session in which he said:

So far, the U.S. dialogue with the PLO has not achieved the desired results. Instead, the United States has adopted Shamir's proposals to hold bogus elections, which will consolidate elections as a first step to annexing the occupied territories forever.

Abu-al-Lutf said: True, President Bush has stated that to achieve peace in the Middle East, the Israeli occupation must be ended. Mr Baker has also asked Israel to abandon its dream of establishing greater Israel and to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their legitimate rights. However, these statements must be translated into reality. The EEC member states can play a positive and effective role to prompt the United States to take practical, planned measures on the ground. [passage omitted]

PLO Denies Role in Amal-Hizballah Fighting

LD2512184189 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] The PLO has issued the following statement:

Some news agencies and Lebanese Television Channel 7 have reported that the Palestinian artillery participated in the fighting yesterday between the Amal movement and Hizballah in villages in the al-Tuffah region. We want to affirm that these reports are completely untrue and groundless. We also want to affirm that we made and are still making all efforts to put an end to this battle, which serves only the enemies of the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples. The orders of the PLO leadership are clear and declared: To work with all means to put an end to this battle between the sons of one people in order to face together our common enemy.

Salah Khalaf Views Sidon Incident, Syria Ties

JN2212092889 Kuwait AL-ANBA' in Arabic 19 Dec 89 pp 1, 30

[By Fatimah Mansur]

[Text] Salah Khalaf—Abu-Iyad—has appealed to Syria to deprive those who seek to obstruct the Syrian-Palestinian meeting of the opportunity to do so. He stressed that the PLO is concentrating all its efforts on the intifadah inside the occupied territories and on the establishment of the Palestinian state. At the same time, he said, the PLO wishes to have good relations with its fraternal Arab countries, including Syria. He pointed out that the Lebanese scene cannot tolerate a Palestinian-Syrian or a Palestinian-Lebanese dispute.

In an exclusive statement to AL-ANBA', Abu-Iyad said the Sidon incident, in which members of many factions, including Fatah, were involved, took place without the knowledge of the Fatah command in Sidon. He said that the command arrested the perpetrators and that the PLO will put them on trial.

Abu-Iyad stressed that neither the Fatah central command nor the Fatah Sidon command were involved in the attack

against the Syrian checkpoint. Immediately before the incident, he explained, the body of a Palestinian was transferred to Sidon from aSyrian prison, and at the same time, the body of a member of the Lebanese Islamic Unification Movement [IUM] also arrived in Sidon from nearby 'Abra village, where there is a Syrian presence. The two bodies arrived a short time before the incident took place, and their arrival led to a strong protest among camp inhabitants and IUM circles. This turbulent atmosphere led about 40 members of various organizations, including Fatah, the IUM, and others to attack the nearest Syrian checkpoint. Soldiers at the checkpoint, however, managed to repulse the attack, and there were no casualities. During their withdrawal, the attackers were confronted by a Nasirist checkpoint; a clash took place, and there were losses on both sides. This is the fact of the Sidon incident; it is not as reported by the news agencies.

Abu-Iyad stressed that the incident is a plot. He urged Syria to expedite preparations to receive the official Palestinian delegation headed by Faruq Qaddumi. After contact between the two leaderships, Abu-Iyad said, the delegation had prepared itself to visit Syria and foil any possible future sedition. He said the PLO was always accused of delaying the travel of its delegation to Damascus; our delegation is now ready to make the visit when the response comes, he added.

PLO Official on Amman Talks, 'Pressures' on PLO

JN2312105289 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 23 Dec 89 pp 28, 20

[By Tawfiq al-'Abid]

[Text] PLO Executive Committee Member 'Abd-al-Rahim Ahmad has said that Jordan and the PLO are undertaking a unified political experiment on the international level to reach a fair, peaceful solution to the Middle East problem and the issue on which it hinges, the Palestine question, which needs a convergence of Arab, Islamic, and friendly international efforts alongside the intifadah to help give momentum to peace. In an exclusive statement to AL-DUSTUR, Ahmad said that the talks held [in Amman] over the past 2 days constituted a new starting point in coordination and consultations to reinforce steadfastness inside the occupied homeland and strengthen the common Arab action.

The PLO official said: Jordan and the PLO will embark on a diplomatic endeavor on the Arab arena to invigorate the higher committee formed by the Casablanca summit under the chairmanship of King Hassan from among the Arab countries that have political and economic influence to make international contacts. He noted that this committee has not yet started its work and its members are still unknown, as if this were a message addressed to the world. Meanwhile, the tripartite committee formed to find a solution to the Lebanese crisis has attained great achievements. He said that the Arab committee's moves will strengthen the Arab stand, ease the pressure on the PLO to accept the Baker plan, and build opposition to American views on the region.

Answering a question, 'Abd-al-Rahim Ahmad said: The Jordanian side has presented an appreciated initiative to remove the tribulation of the kinfolk inside and outside the occupied territory in terms of personal matters, passports, laissez-passers, visits, and bringing West Bank agriculture produce into Jordan.

Ahmad said that it has been agreed to revive the joint Jordanian- Palestinian committee for supporting the steadfastness through the assessment of its march, programs, plans, and priorities. He added that it has also been agreed to form a committee to visit the Arab countries committed to supporting the steadfastness to urge them fulfill their commitments and to explain the real tribulations resulting from Israeli repression.

The PLO official stated: The PLO is now suffering from heavy financial burdens because the Casablanca summit resolutions and the support for the intifadah are honored by only three countries. He added that the PLO had contacted a number of Arab countries to transfer the contributions of the Palestinians working in those countries, estimated at $300 million, to no avail. The Palestinians working in these Arab countries contribute 5 percent of their monthly salaries to the Palestine National Fund.

Answering another question, 'Abd-al-Rahim Ahmad said that the PLO was and still is being exposed to intensive pressure to accept the Baker plan, which deals with us as an invisible factor. He said: Nobody can make a decision annulling himself. And the U.S. Administration cannot cancel out the PLO from the political equation in the region. He noted that the failure to invite the PLO to participate in the Washington meeting has its own dimensions. He said: He who is searching for a solution should speak with us directly, not from under the table.

He said that the PLO observes the Palestinian principles and it will never move away from them. These principles were communicated to the U.S. Administration and the five permanent members of the Security Council. The PLO has the right to form its delegation to the Palestinian-Israeli dialogue. There is no argument about this. The PLO also favors an open agenda that includes the principle of elections, applying the right to self-determination and repatriation, and considering the dialogue a prelude to convening the international peace conference.

On the Euro-Arab dialogue conference, the PLO official said: The PLO presented proposals in which it asked the European countries to play an active role in the Middle East to ward off the American attempts to cancel this role, as well as to prevent the attempts to bypass the international conference and present it through American interpretations. He added: We asked the Arab countries to present a political initiative so that the Middle East will not remain an arena for the U.S. initiative only. We also called for increasing economic and cultural aid and moral support for the occupied homeland.

Algeria

FLN Central Committee Continues To Meet

President Addresses Session

LD2412142789 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] The FLN [National Liberation Front] Central Committee's first session since the extraordinary congress was held began this morning at the Palais des Nations. On the agenda are several issues. Here is a report by our correspondent:

The session is being chaired by President Chadli Bendjedid, the FLN chairman. Following the formation of a bureau consisting of Abdelhamid Mehri, Hachemi Hadjeres, Abdelaziz Belkhadem, and Mohamed Jeghaba, the president proposed to the Central Committee an agenda which includes the discussion and approval of the following points: the internal regulations of the FLN; the internal regulations of the Central Committee; the election of the Central Committee's secretary general; the election of the Political Bureau; and the ratification of the political statement. The agenda was adopted unanimously.

President Chadli Bendjedid then made a speech in which he dealt with a number of issues. He reaffirmed the necessity for the FLN to clarify its attitude vis-a-vis all the national issues currently being discussed at national level, particularly following the results of the FLN extraordinary congress, in which the genuine practice of democracy within the Front was very much in evidence.

He said: As president, I request the political leadership of the Front to work in order to occupy the arena and clarify the Front's attitude. So far the Front has not expressed its attitude clearly. Necessity requires that the Front clarify its attitude. President Chadli Bendjedid added: I hope the Front will come out with firm and clear attitudes, and that some kind of harmony will prevail between every struggler and official in order to express the Front's view.

President Chadli Bendjedid also underlined the common denominator between the members of the Front—the strugglers and the leadership—the constants which the FLN has been advocating and the constants stipulated by the Constitution. Today, the president said, anything is permissible in expressing one's views, and it is time we unite and address reality with total objectivity and without imitation. However, we should benefit from the experience of others. There are contradictions and blind imitation in the arena; leaderships in many aspects develop slogans which are emphasized but difficult to apply in the field, as was the case in the past. We should proceed according to our abilities and with our citizens and community, we should be committed to our principles.

Following the speech by President Chadli Bendjedid, Abdelhamid Mehri announced that the work related to internal issues of the Party will be conducted in closed session. The sessions will become public when political issues are discussed. The FLN Central Committee consists of 272 members, while its Political Bureau consists—according to Party statutes—of 9-15 members and the secretary general.

The FLN Central Committee is meeting for 1 day.

Mehri, Political Bureau Elected

LD2512214689 Algiers Television Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Excerpts] Abdelhamid Mehri was re-elected secretary general of the National Liberation Front [FLN] Central Committee during the proceedings of its first session. The Central Committee also elected 15 members to the Political Bureau. Here are the details from Hassan Benaouda.

[Benaouda] The Central Committee resumed the proceedings of its first session for the second consecutive day. Presented were the two projects of the internal regulations of the Central Committee and the FLN which have been approved. This took place during a closed session. After the proceedings ended, the group entrusted with preparing the political communique, which continued its work this morning, submitted it to the Central Committee for approval. It passed by a majority. [passage omitted]

Immediately after this, Chadli Bendjedid, president of the Front, in turn proposed Abdelhamid Mehri as secretary general of the Central Committee. This proposal was accepted with strong applause from the members of the Central Committee. [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Abdelhamid Mehri] Your Excellency the President, my brothers. These are the names of those under consideration for membership in the Political Bureau which I will read in alphabetical order. The brothers mentioned are:
Abdelkader Bendaoud
Ali Benflis
Abderrahmane Belayat
Said Bouhedja
(Omar Touil)
Mohamed Djeghaba
Hachemi Hadjeres
Mouloud Hamrouche
Hidouci Ghazi
Fekhakha Mohamed
Kharoubi Mohamed Cherif
Dellouci Boualem
Sid Ahmed Ghozali
Seghir Hachemi
Kaci Aissa.

[Chadli Bendjedid] Good, who is for, raising your hand, and who is against? Thus it is a minority who did not approve. [end recording]

[Benaouda] After that the final session was adjourned and the first session of the FLN Central Committee ended.

Communique Stresses Reforms

LD2512224289 Algiers Television Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] The Central Committee approved the political communique which mentioned particularly the following:

The Central Committee records the developments which are witnessed by the country under the aegis of the Constitution of 23 February 1989 and also the radical changes in political and economic life. The Central Committee affirms the commitment of the militants to the reforms and their eagerness to make the democratic march succeed with responsible practices which respect plurality and work for the anchoring and deepening of democracy through a strong and coherent party action which enables the National Liberation Front [FLN] to carry out its mission completely so that the required stability for making the reforms succeed is achieved for the country and so that the people regain the necessary tranquility to win the battle of democracy and development.

In this respect, the Central Committee stresses the importance of responsible dialogue, sound discussion, and the fruition of all the constructive ideas which take in consideration the supreme interest of the homeland, remote from one-upmanship and the fanning of sterile conflicts and this necessitates making the people aware of the dangers of violence and the use of various [types of] intellectual terrorism and chaotic practices, as well as anything else that can harm the security of the citizens and the stability of the society. The attempt to hold responsible dialogue between all those concerned with the destiny of the homeland will enables us to face effectively the problems and successfully overcome the difficulties in the field, as well as paving the way for a new era in which the people will be responsible for their destiny based on all their dynamic forces.

While recording the leading role of the FLN in adopting a comprehensive reform, the Central Committee stresses the need to work for the rapid implementation of the economic reforms which were blessed by the people and supported by the masses. It also affirmed their application in the field in a way that serves the interest of the people remote from partial solutions and in a way which encompasses all the industrial, agricultural, and social sectors without neglecting the private sector, considering the role it plays in the fields of production, marketing, and services. The comprehensive character of reforms necessitates special care for the youth so that unemployment will be gradually eliminated and in order to help to its various strata with their major problems.

While the Central Committee records the positive phenomenon seen in the appearance of varied party information, it gives approves the expansion of information sources and stresses the character of public information which must stay in the service of all the people remote from any bias. From this premise, the Central Committee stresses the character of the neutral reporting of public information to enable citizens to follow the news without distoration so that their right to honest, objective, and national information is preserved.

The rehabilitation of the public service role in the information sector does not contradict the appearance of party information and press commentary which defends existing trends and reflects safely the plurality adopted by the Constitution.

Egypt

Syrian Vice President Khaddam Arrives in Cairo

NC2312083989 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0834 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 23 Dec (MENA)—Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam arrived in Cairo today on an official visit to Egypt, carrying a message from Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to President Husni Mubarak. Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi welcomed Khaddam at the airport.

Khaddam's Arrival Remarks

JN2312132589 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo—At 1040 today, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak received Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, President Hafiz al-Asad's envoy. President Mubarak and the president's envoy held a bilateral round of talks.

Khaddam arrived at Cairo International Airport at 1030 today where he was welcomed by Egyptian Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi and a number of ministers. At the VIP lounge, 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam made a statement for journalists and Arab and foreign news agency correspondents, in which he said: I wish there were a device to measure the depth of feelings and emotions I feel; I wish I could express my feelings. He added: Actually, since the plane landed at Cairo airport, I have been having profound feelings taking us back to the past and pushing us toward the future. It is a great pleasure to be given the opportunity to visit Cairo carrying a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to the brother and friendly president, Husni Mubarak. Indeed, my feelings are twofold. Of great importance is the fact that I am visiting Cairo for the first time in 13 years. My soul and heart and the hearts of all Syrians are full of amity and profound feelings. Also, I am carrying a message of brotherhood, amity, and communication between Syria and Egypt from President Hafiz al-Asad to his brother President Husni Mubarak.

Responding to a question on the possibility of a meeting between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Husni Mubarak to

continue the march of amity and brotherhood, Khaddam said: I hope the meeting will take place earlier than you expect.

Responding to another question on the future of relations between the two countries, the vice president said: You know that in the past Egypt and Syria had relations that were more distinguished than their relations with the other Arab countries throughout the nation's long history. Throughout the long history of the region, before and after the [Islamic] conquest, there had been ties and links between the Egyptians and Syrians. These links brought the two peoples together and turned them into a wall that withstood all the dangers that threatened the region. He added: As you know, Syria and Egypt constituted a base for defending the Arab nation against the Moguls and Tartars and against the crusades. They fought against Napoleon's invasion, confronted new colonialism, and resisted Zionism. The two countries have a joint pan-Arab history full of events, hopes, blood, tears, and aspirations. We all know that when Syria and Egypt agree and when Egypt and Syria unite, the entire Arab nation leans toward the center, the Arab situation improves, and Arab citizens become optimistic about a better future. And when relations are marred by some clouds, this reflects on the Arab nation. This has been reflected at many stages. However, these stages are passing stages. Having carried the major burden for the Arab nation and its national interests, Syria and Egypt must pursue their march and shoulder this burden together. We in Syria and Egypt, and as leaders of both countries, hope we will be able to respond to the aspirations of citizens in Syria and Egypt and throughout the Arab homeland.

Concluding his statement, the president's envoy said: Amending the course of bilateral relations will necessarily amend the entire Arab situation.

Early Meeting With Mubarak Planned

NC2312092489 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam arrived in Cairo this morning on a brief visit to Egypt during which he will meet with President Husni Mubarak. Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi and a number of ministers welcomed the Syrian guest at the airport.

Khaddam said that a meeting between Presidents Mubarak and al-Asad may be take place earlier than expected. He said he is bearing a message of greetings and amity from President al-Asad to President Mubarak. Khaddam said he is happy to be in Cairo for the first time in 13 years.

Khaddam said that Egypt and Syria are bound together with strong ties and have repeatedly teamed up to repulse attacks.

Meets With President Mubarak

NC2312092689 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0919 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 23 Dec (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Syrian vice president and emissary of Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, at the presidential palace this morning.

President Mubarak held a session of private talks with the Syrian president's emissary.

Khaddam-Sidqi News Conference

NC2312123789 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1130 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 23 Dec (MENA)—Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al- Halim Khaddam has said that Presidents Husni Mubarak and Hafiz al- Asad will meet soon and that the time and venue of the summit meeting will be decided by the two leaders.

Khaddam said that the meeting will produce tangible results that will put the relations between the two countries on the right course and thus benefit the entire Arab people.

This was said at a news conference held by Khaddam and Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi following a 2-hour session of talks between President Mubarak and the Syrian envoy, and attended by Dr Sidqi.

Dr 'Atif Sidqi said at the news conference that meetings at the technical level will be held between the two countries before the Egyptian-Syrian summit is convened. He said the names of officials participating in these meetings will be announced in the next 2 days.

Commenting on his meeting with President Mubarak today, which is the first meeting held on that level, Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al- Halim Khaddam said that it is not the first meeting between President Mubarak and a Syrian official but one of a series of meetings and contacts that have been taking place between the two countries. Several meetings had taken place between Presidents Mubarak and Al-Asad in Casablanca, he said, pointing out that fraternity and the profound relations that bind the two countries were the basis of these meetings.

'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam expressed his profound satisfaction with the results of today's meeting. He indicated that during the meeting he conveyed a letter to President Mubarak from his brother President al-Asad dealing with the relations between the two countries.

Khaddam said wide-ranging and in-depth discussions of Egyptian-Syrian relations took place during the meeting, recalling that the fraternity of the two countries go back to historic times and will continue in the future. Our viewpoints in Egypt and Syria agree on that point, he said.

Khaddam said that the coming meeting between the two presidents will lead to practical and tangible results in returning Egyptian- Syrian relations to the right course and placing these relations in the right perspective, a matter which will benefit Egypt, Syria, and the entire Arab people. He said: We are optimistic about the future of these relations, which will greatly serve the interests of our Arab people, Egypt, and Syria.

Khaddam said: We hope that the steps to be taken in the sphere of these relations will be made in quick succession in order to respond to the aspirations and interests of citizens in Egypt and Syria.

Asked if he and President Mubarak discussed Syria's role in the peace process and Egypt's position on holding a Palestinian-Israeli meeting in Cairo, Khaddam said that in reality discussions with President Mubarak today revolved around bilateral relations.

Asked when citizens in Egypt and Syria will begin to feel the results of Egyptian-Syrian meetings, 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam said citizens in Egypt and Syria will begin to feel the results of these contacts and meetings soon, God willing.

To another question concerning the expectation in some quarters that relations between Egypt and Syria will be restored soon, Khaddam answered: I have already noted that a summit meeting will be held between the two presidents. During this meeting, a number of steps and measures to rectify the status of relations between the two countries in various fields will be announced.

He added it is natural that when we refer to a rectification of relations, we mean this in a comprehensive, not narrow, sense. We are confident the course of relations in their comprehensive sense and with their various channels will be rectified following the meeting of the two presidents.

Khaddam added: We can now tell the Egyptian and Syrian people that their presidents are determined to meet all their aspirations not only with regard to bilateral relations but also with regard to many issues of common concern to both countries as well as to the rest of the Arab world.

Answering a question on economic and (?cultural) relations between Egypt and Syria, Khaddam said Egypt and Syria are Arab and not foreign countries and as such they have special bonds that distinguish ties between them. This, he said, is a fact felt by the average Egyptians and Syrians.

Officials in both countries, Khaddam said, should translate these popular feelings into a reality and work for the realization of the common interests and aspirations of both countries.

Khaddam said that the two governments should restore cultural, political, and other ties between the two countries to their appropriately cordial setting, for this is the desire of the people in both countries.

Asked about the effects of today's meeting on the Lebanese situation, the Palestinian issue, and Egyptian-Syrian rapprochement, Khaddam said that when rapprochement and cohesion take place between Egypt and Syria, the Arab nation, from East to West, will be positively affected.

Answering another question on whether the meeting between Presidents Mubarak and Al-Asad will take place before the end of this year, Khaddam said: In fact, I cannot say if it will be before or after the end of this year. But it will take place very soon and the two presidents will certainly set the time and venue.

Asked if there is a prospect for a Syrian relationship with the Arab Cooperation Council, he said: Syria and Egypt are presently discussing Syrian-Egyptian relations and the means of correcting their course and hence we did not deal with other issues.

Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi welcomed the Syrian vice president's visit that represents a good and positive step between the two countries and said that this and future steps are expected to yield many good results. He said that President Mubarak received 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and that many issues were discussed at this meeting which the Syrian guest referred to in his statement.

Dr Sidqi added: It has been decided to hold a meeting between Presidents Mubarak and Al-Asad soon. Until this meeting is held, other meetings at the technical level will be held. He added that the names of officials from the two countries who will take part in the [word indistinct] meetings will be announced in 2 days' time and that they will prepare the necessary ground and study the possible immediate fields for bilateral cooperation in order to restore the Syrian-Egyptian course to its former state and perhaps to a better one after benefitting from past experiences.

Dr Sidqi stressed that both Egypt and Syria are eager to have these studies done with full awareness of the world issues that are facing the Arabs, including developments in Eastern and Western Europe, because the aim is to have our cooperation not only based on emotion but also to be objective and in line with international developments and circumstances.

Dr Sidqi accompanied 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam on a tour of the most important landmarks of Cairo, including the October War Panorama, the International Conferences Palace, the new Opera House, and a number of another important landmarks before attending the working luncheon at al-Tahirah Palace in honor of the Syrian guest and which will be attended by Dr Yusuf Wali, deputy prime minister and minister of agriculture and land reclamation, and the ministers of information, transport, communications, electricity, petroleum, cabinet affairs, finance, education, justice, and the head of the President's Office for Political Affairs.

Concludes Brief Visit, Departs

NC2312140089 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1343 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 23 Dec (MENA)—Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam left Cairo this afternoon following a brief visit to Egypt, lasting several hours, during which he handed President Husni Mubarak a message from Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

Khaddam was seen off at the airport by Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi and the ministers of information, transport, communications, electricity, and petroleum.

Yasir 'Arafat Arrives in Cairo for Talks

NC2412091089 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0849 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 24 Dec (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine, arrived in Cairo this morning for a visit. He will hold talks with senior Egyptian officials.

'Arafat was met at the airport by Dr Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs; Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu-Mazin) and 'Abdallah Hurani, members of the PLO Executive Committee; Sa'id Kamal, ambassador of Palestine to Cairo; and Zuhdi al-Qidrah, Fatah Movement representative in Cairo.

Meets With 'Abd-al-Majid

NC2412190789 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1830 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 24 Dec (MENA)—Yasir 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine, held a session of talks with Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, this evening. Dr Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, attended the session.

PLO Executive Committee members Jamal al-Surani, Mahmud 'Abbas, and 'Abdallah al-Hurani; Palestinian Ambassador in Cairo Sa'id Kamal; and Fatah representative in Cairo Zuhdi al-Qidrah also attended the session.

Comments on Meeting

NC2412203589 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1948 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 24 Dec (MENA)—Following his 1-and-1/2-hour meeting with Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and Dr Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, Yasir 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine, emphasized that coordination and consultations exist between the Palestinians and Egypt on all levels and at all times.

'Arafat said his current visit and his talks with President Husni Mubarak this morning and with Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid later this evening were part of this process of coordination and consultation, especially in light of the current events at the Palestinian, Arab, and international levels.

Asked his hopes for the Palestinian issue and the meetings that are expected to be held in the United States to give momentum to the peace process in view of the advent of the new year, 'Arafat said: First of all, I hope that U.S. President George Bush will remember the Palestinians' human rights. He has been talking about human rights everywhere in the world but not about the Palestinian people's human rights.

Responding to another question about his stand regarding the forthcoming meeting of the Egyptian and Israeli foreign ministers and the U.S secretary of state in Washington, 'Arafat said: I have not been officially notified of this meeting.

Asked whether there was Egyptian-Palestinian coordination in this respect, 'Arafat said: Coordination exists between us and Egypt on everything. There are not Egyptian and Palestinian roles; there is one role. We have never differed with Egypt.

Leaves for Baghdad 25 Dec

NC2512221289 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2205 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 25 Dec (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat left here tonight for Baghdad after a 2-day private visit to Egypt during which he was received by President Husni Mubarak.

French Prime Minister Arrives on Private Visit

NC2512133989 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1135 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 25 Dec (MENA)—French Prime Minister Michel Rocard and his wife arrived in Cairo today on a private visit for several days.

Rocard was received at the airport by Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi, who will accompany him to a meeting with President Husni Mubarak. Later, Mubarak will give a lunch in honor of the French Prime Minister.

Comments on Warsaw Pact, Romania

NC2512170989 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1619 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Cairo, 25 Dec (MENA)—French Prime Minister Michel Rocard has asserted that relations between French and Egyptian officials are excellent.

Speaking after a meeting with President Husni Mubarak today, Rocard said that they had made a comprehensive

rewiew of international economic and political issues. He said: We spoke at length about Eastern Europe and the debt issue.

On France's position on the expected Palestinian-Israeli dialogue, Rocard said France hopes that the parties to the conflict will hold a dialogue and that mediation efforts will prove useful. He announced that Egypt, the United States, and France are willing to make efforts if the situation requires.

Answering a question on the situation in Romania and whether France supports the entry of Warsaw Pact troops into that country, Rocard said that France has enthusiastically supported the courage of the Romanian people who paid a very heavy price to topple a vicious dictatorship in very bloody circumstances. He referred in this connection to the large number of victims who fell.

He added that France had stressed that the international community must provide all that the Romanian people and their representatives in the National Salvation Front hope for.

He noted that it is not accurate to say that France wanted the Warsaw Pact to intervene and declared: What we meant was that if contacts were established between the National Salvation Front and the USSR, France would see this as positive.

Commenting on the Arab-European dialogue and the recent meeting held in Paris in this context, the French prime minister said that the dialogue aims to intensify relations, improve cooperation, and make the two sides better acquainted with each other.

'Abd-al-Majid: Medical Aid to Romania Planned

NC2412155189 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] The Arab Republic of Egypt has decided to send urgent medical assistance to Romania to help deal with the situation resulting from recent developments.

This was stated by Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, following his meeting today with the Romanian ambassador in Cairo.

Dr 'Abd-al-Majid said Egypt recognizes Romania as a state which has relations with Egypt, regardless of its ruling system. He added that Egypt is following current developments closely and hopes democracy and freedom will be reestablished in the country. He went on to say that Egypt, as a democratic state, supports efforts to reestablish democracy in Romania.

Libya

Reported Involvement in Romanian Events Denied

LD2312150889 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1430 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Tripoli, 23 Dec (JANA)—REUTER news agency has reported a news item quoting TANJUG to the effect that there are Libyan forces backing the troops of Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. In this respect, a responsible source at the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison has said in a statement to JANA that this report is groundless and devoid of any truth, that it is a planted report aimed at tarnishing the image of the Great Jamahiriyah, and that it comes within the framework of methods used by newsmen who are not committed to the (?ethics) of journalism. The Great Jamahiriyah does not attach any importance to such reports because it is accustomed to such lies, and because our way is known: A permanent call for revolution and for the masses to take their natural rights back from the domination of parties and from parties' bad effects on peoples.

Spokesman Repeats Denial

LD2512155489 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Tripoli, 25 Dec (JANA)—A spokesman for the People's Committee for the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation once again has categorically denied and deplored the rumors and tendentious reports carried by certain hostile official circles and information organs alleging that Libyans are taking part in the current events in Romania. The spokesman has affirmed the firm position of the Jamahiriyah and its belief in the right and capability of peoples to take over power from the traditional, individual, and partisan instruments of rule. The spokesman has said that what certain organs and official circles are trying to disseminate and repeat for known and open purposes cannot apply to the state of the masses, where the people possess power, wealth, and arms.

Romanian Embassy Supports Downfall of Ceausescu

LD2312193989 Tripoli JANA in English 1833 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Tripoli, al-Kanun [December] 23, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The Romanian Embassy to great Jamahiriyah declared its total support for and solidarity with the Romanian people in its massive popular revolution against the former president Ceausescu. A spokesman for the embassy told JANA that the members of the Romanian diplomatic mission to great Jamahiriyah declare their total support for the downfall of the former regime in Romania and their solidarity with the people's revolution calling for freedom and emancipation.

The Romanian diplomatic mission made clear that they have already sent a message to the provisional general

people's committee running the affairs of Romania asserting their cohesion and solidarity with the Romanian people in toppling the former regime. The mission stressed in its message the need to settle the conflict in favour of the Romanian people and setting up people's power in Romania.

Al-Qadhdhafi Receives Message From USSR on Panama

LD2212145989 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic 1330 GMT 22 Dec 89]

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution today received the ambassador of the Soviet Union to the Great Jamahiriyah at the ambassador's request. The ambassador brought a reply from the Soviet president to the message which the brother leader asked him to convey last Wednesday. The Soviet president's reply said that the USSR shares with the Great Jamahiriyah its concern about the situation in Panama, which is being subjected to a flagrant U.S. invasion, and that the Soviet Union strongly condemns this aggression.

The Soviet Union has called on the United States to withdraw its military forces from Panama immediately. This was confirmed by the Soviet Government's statement issued yesterday, Thursday, which was endorsed by the supreme council of the Soviet parliament, whose members have strongly denounced the U.S. invasion of Panama. This attitude was confirmed by the speech of the USSR delegate before the Security Council. The Soviet president confirmed the USSR's eagerness to continue the joint efforts of the Great Jamahiriyah and the Soviet Union for the sake of halting the U.S. invasion of Panama.

Noriega Appeal Highlights Failure to Combat U.S.

LD2512175989 Tripoli JANA in English 1645 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Tripoli, 25 Al-Kanun [December] JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—About the appeal made by the leader of Panamian national resistance, Manuel Antonio Noriega, JANA editor of international affairs wrote:

The appeal made by the leader of the Panamanian national resistance to the Vatican asking for intervention to end the brutal massacres committed by America, the head of international organized terrorism, represents a historical condemnation of the international community in general. The community has been unable to intercept the barbarianism of Yankees who disregarded all norms and conventions confirmed by peoples to organize and govern dealing among them in cases of peace and war.

It stresses anew the falling of most of states under the imperialist American pressure. Because the aggressor is America, and the aggressed is a small people who have refused the American domination and resisted it with arms. The editor said "Time is high for the small peoples to rely on themselves, and quit the ranks of the professional killers of the free peoples will. They have to form the world people's front in order to fight imperialism, with all its forms such as fascism, racism, and world Zionism".

Sudan

SPLA Spokesman Denies Downing of French Plane

EA2212163189 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] The official spokesman of the SPLM/SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Sudanese People's Liberation Army] political-military high command today issued the following statement:

1. When 'Umar al-Bashir decided on the third of November to close the airspace against relief flights and subsequent bombings of civilian targets in SPLA-held areas, and government denial of responsibility, our units in the field were put on an increased level of alertness, with orders to consider any plane flying over SPLA airspace as hostile. This is applicable to all planes unless those given permission by the movment.

This particular MSF [Medecins Sans Frontieres] plane was not cleared with the movement in advance, and therefore, could have been shot down by our antiaircraft defense unit.

2. However, the facts from the field confirmed the following:

1) The plane was shot down within the perimeter of defense of the army in Aweil. It was hit while still spiralling over Aweil to gain altitude before finally heading towards Khartoum. The missile which hit the plane originated from within the perimeter of army defense.

2) All SPLA units near to Aweil reported that they were not involved in downing the plane.

3) There is no way that the missile which shot the plane could have been SPLA's, unless the junta wants to tell the world that the two warring armies are coexisting in Aweil town. This is, far from being true.

All indications are that it is the junta which brought down the plane in an attempt to (?wreck) relief work, and to justify the junta's continued ban on relief activities in southern Sudan. The international community should demand an impartial investigation into this tragic incident.

This is not the first time that Islamic fundamentalist elements in the army play dirty and deadly games to serve their diabolical objectives.

Late last year and following the signing of the November 1988 peace agreement, these elements made an attempt on the life of the defense minister, Gen 'Abd al-Majid Hamid Khalil, when he was flying from Wau to Khartoum. They fired a missile from Wau airport to the

plane, missing it narrowly. The objective was to abort the peace agreement, which was vehemently opposed by the Islamic fundamentalists.

Now with the government in Khartoum firmly in their hands, these saboteurs are more assured to act with impunity. Those who know the Islamic fundamentalists well need no convincing. With them, not only does the end justify the means, they as well expose a dictum thus, lie in the service of Da'wah [Islamic Call Organization] is absolutely acceptable to God.

A recent example of this was shown on the tv screens in Sudan last month, following the fall of Kurmuk to the SPLA in October, and when the junta failed to mobilize popular support against the movement, it reverted to a most wicked and bad campaign to portray the SPLA as anti-Islam and Islamic values, in a cheap attempt to arouse Muslim sentiments against the SPLA. Themes were played and broadcast on Sudan TV showing how SPLA had turned the Kurmuk mosque into a stable, and even worse still, they showed the Koran, Islamic holy book, being torn and its pages used as toilet tissues. People who can go that low have only the sky as the limit of what atrocities they can commit. The Sudanese have before seen mediocres running their affairs, but the present junta has excellence, not only in mediocrity, but more so in treachery and callousness. They are the (?scum) of the earth.

The SPLM/SPLA extends its heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims of this callous act, and hopes that the humanitarian work for which they gave their lives will continue.

U.S., UK Envoys Briefed on Nairobi Talks

EA2312221489 Omdurman Dmestic Service in Arabic 1930 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Colonel Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, member of the Revolution Command Council and chairman of the national peace dialogue conference, has given the U.S. and British ambassadors a detailed briefing on the Nairobi negotiations between the delegations of the government and the rebel movement.

In his meeting with his excellency the U.S. ambassador, Col Khalifah said the government's delegation had attended the Nairobi negotiations with a clear and comprehensive peace program in the form of the results of the national dialogue which had dealt with all points of disagreement. However, the delegation of the rebel movement had concentrated on procedural aspects and had exhibited a measure of intransigence by adhering to conditions which had been overtaken by events. He stressed that the application of federalism in Sudan would automatically solve the problem of the laws.

Col Khalifah explained to his excellency the British ambassador that the laws currently in force in the country would be reviewed in conformity with the resolutions of the national dialogue conference and that a technical committee had been formed for this purpose.

The U.S. ambassador referred to the statement issued by his government expressing satisfaction at the results of the negotiations and regret that the two sides had not reached an agreement on a cease-fire.

The meeting also dealt with stage two of Operation Lifeline and the need for it to succeed.

Contacts Held for Talks in Cairo With Rebels

Foreign Minister on Talks

EA2112130689 Omdurman Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 20 Dec 89

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Ali Ahmad Sahlul assured that there are Sudanese-Egyptian contacts to hold a round of talks in Cairo between the government and the rebel movement. Sahlul also stated that the Armed Forces had managed to clear the rebels from the Blue Nile area and control the town of Rumbek.

Interior Minister on Contacts

EA2112130189 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic 1930 GMT 20 Dec 89

[Text] Brigadier Faysal 'Ali Abu-Salih, member of the Revolution Command Council and minister of interior, has confirmed that Egypt is working to contain the problem of the south. In a statement to the Kuwaiti newspaper, AL-ANBA', Brig Abu-Salih said the Egyptian role is still continuing and President Husni Mubarak, chairman of the OAU, is holding contacts with African states in this respect.

Bahrain

King Fahd Arrives in Manama on Private Visit

JN2312123889 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1215 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Excerpt] Manama, 23 Dec (WAKH)—King Fahd Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques and king of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, arrived in Manama this afternoon on a private visit to Bahrain. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

PRC President Yang Shangkun Arrives for Visit

LD2412163689 Kuwait Domestic Service in Arabic 1516 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Excerpt] PRC President Yang Shangkun arrived here today on a 3-day official visit to the State of Kuwait. The Chinese president was welcomed by Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad; Shaykh Sa'd al-Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister; Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad; deputy prime minister and foreign minister; and a number of officials. [passage omitted]

Holds Talks With Amir

LD2512111489 Kuwait KUNA in English 0948 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Kuwait, Dec 25 (KUNA)—Chinese President Yang Shangkun Monday called on his highness the amir at Bayan Palace where the two leaders held the first round of official talks.

Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Shaykh Khalid al-Ahmad al-Sabah said that discussions centered on the latest developments in international relations.

Talks also centered on the Middle East Situation and peace efforts to solve the Palestinian question in addition to international efforts to reach a just peace settlement between Iraq and Iran.

Shaykh Khalid said that discussions between the two leaders also tackled bilateral relations and ways of boosting them in various fields.

Later today, Shaykh Jabir will host a dinner banquet in hour of the visiting guest and the accompanying delegation.

The Chinese president arrived here from the United Arab Emirates last night on the second leg of a Gulf tour.

Romanian Ambassador Supports Salvation Front

LD2412095489 Kuwait KUNA in English 0821 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Kuwait, Dec 24 (KUNA)—The Romanian ambassador to Kuwait Sunday declared his and the entire embassy's allegiance to the Council of National Salvation of Romania and its platform.

In a statement to KUNA, the ambassador, Gheorghe Serbanescu said "we declare our full support to any action which is for the benefit of the Romanian people."

He added that the embassy staffers support any action that can assure safety and tranquility of Romanian people and which "can meet its endeavour for peace, prosperity and welfare and which underlines its dignity, its noble national virtues and ideals and which can strengthen the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of our country."

More than 20 Romanian embassies in various world countries had so far supported the new Romanian leadership that ousted President Nicolae Ceausescu and declared a set of reforms in that East European country which is currently witnessing a bloody civil war between forces loyal and against Ceausescu.

Oman

Fahd, Qabus Agree To Delimit Border

JN2312144789 Muscat Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] A joint communique was issued in both Muscat and Riyadh on the private visit to the Sultanate of Oman by the custodian of the two holy mosques. The joint communique reads:

At the fraternal invitation of His Majesty Sultan Qabus Ibn-Sa'id of Oman, King Fahd Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud of Saudi Arabia, custodian of the two holy mosques, made a private visit to the Sultanate of Oman from 23 to 25 Jumada al-Ula 1410 Hegira, corresponding to 21-23 December 1989. During this visit, the two great monarchs held talks marked by a spirit of genuine fraternal sentiment and complete confidence. During these talks, they discussed the situation in the region, the developments pertaining to Arab and Islamic issues, as well as various international issues of interest to both states.

The views of the two monarchs were in agreement on all the issues that were discussed. The two monarchs expressed their satisfaction with the steady development of bilateral relations and their continued enhancement in the interest of the two countries. They also affirmed their determination to continue bolstering bilateral cooperation and developing common interests.

By virtue of the ties of kinship and neighborliness binding the two countries, and to affirm the excellent and strong fraternal ties existing between the Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, King Fahd Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, and His Majesty Sultan Qabus Ibn-Sa'id agreed to demarcate the borders between the two fraternal countries. King Fahd Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian

of the two holy mosques, expressed his thanks and appreciation for the hospitality and good reception accorded him on the official and popular levels—a matter that confirms the strength of ties and links existing between the two fraternal countries and peoples.

Fahd Departs 23 Dec

JN2312143289 Muscat Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] His Majesty King Fahd Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, left the country this afternoon at the conclusion of a 2-day private visit to the Sultanate of Oman following his participation alongside his brothers, the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] member-states' leaders, in the 10th GCC summit, which ended its meetings Thursday [21 December].

His Majesty Sultan Qabus Ibn-Sa'id led those who saw off the custodian of the two holy mosques upon his departure.

The custodian of the two holy mosques was accorded an official sendoff ceremony upon his departure from the sultan's private airport. When the motorcade of the well-beloved sultan and his brother the custodian of the two holy mosques arrived at the sultan's private airport, the well-beloved sultan accompanied his brother the custodian of the two holy mosques to the dais, where the band played the national anthems of both Saudi Arabia and Oman. Meanwhile, the custodian of the two holy mosques was being accorded a 21-gun salute.

The much-beloved sultan was with his brother, the custodian of the two holy mosques, when the latter shook hands with the senior officials on hand to see him off: Cabinet ministers, the GCC member states' ambassadors to Oman, senior Omani officers, and Saudi Embassy staff in Muscat. At the ramp, the two Arab leaders hugged each other. The custodian of the two holy mosques then boarded his plane, which then left the country.

PDRY

ANA Issues Statement on Events in Romania

EA2312202789 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 0330 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] The ADEN NEWS AGENCY, ANA, has issued a statement on the events in Romania saying that the social circles in Democratic Yemen have followed this week's regrettable and very bloody events in the friendly Socialist Republic of Romania with deep concern. The large number of victims would not have fallen and the attendant losses would not have been incurred had mature issues been treated in a spirit of humanitarian socialism in realization of Romanian society's pressing objective need to develop in the context of human society worldwide increasingly demanding broader democracy and the upholding of human rights and civil liberties, by effectively involving the masses in the determination of their destinies, and by making man the pivot of all political, economic, social, and spiritual activities.

The agency added that the social circles in our country believed that arming oneself with sound realistic ideas on diverse phenomena and differences emerging in the course of life at the level of relations within each society in particular or at the level of relations between states, nations, and peoples in general had become a pressing need for avoiding disasters and dangers arising from dealing with such disparities and differences using the methods of outdated thinking which exaggerates the role of force and violence and ignores the interests of peoples in terms of freedom, democracy, and progress.

The agency added that the social circles in our country had expressed their deep sympathy with the friendly Romanian people and the families of the victims. They hoped this friendly country would soon emerge from its current crisis using peaceful and democratic means to preserve the Romanian people's gains and bring their aspirations for democracy and progress to realization.

INA Receives Romanian Front 'Official Statement'

JN2512125089 Baghdad INA in English
1215 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, Dec 25, INA—The National Salvation Front in Romania stressed its resolve to establish democracy, liberty and dignity of the Romanian people.

In an official statement issued by the Front and delivered to the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY (INA) by the Romanian Embassy in Baghdad said the programme of the National Salvation Front proposes abandoning of the leading role of a single party and establishing a democratic pluralistic system of governing, organizing of free elections during next April and separation of legislative, executive and judicial power in the state and election of all political leaders for one or at the most two mandates. No one can demand power for whole life, the statement said.

The statement of the National Salvation Council further said that a committee on drawing up the new constitution will start its activity immediately.

It added that the Council proposes that the country to be called in the future Romania. [sentence as received]

The statement further said that the council would restructure the whole national economy on the basis of rentability and efficiency criteria, elimination of all administrative bureaucratic methods in the centralized economical management and promotion of initiatives and competence in managing of economical sectors.

The statement went on saying that the Romanian National Salvation Council is resolved to restructure agriculture and enlarging the small rural production and stopping the destroying of villages.

It stressed intention to reorganize Romanian education according to contemporary demand and on democratic and humanist bases.

The statement referred to the elimination of ideological dogmas which caused so many prejudices to the Romanian people and promoting the real values of humanity.

It stressed on setting up new bases for the development of national culture and taking over the press, radio, television from the hands of a despotic family to the hands of the people.

The statement of the National Salvation Council affirmed observing rights and liberties of national minorities and ensuring full equality in rights with the Romanians.

It also stressed reorganizing the entire commerce of the country, starting from the demands of satisfying with priority all the daily needs of the Romanian population.

"We shall put an end to the export of agricultural products, we shall reduce the export of oil products, according to the needs of heat and light of the population", it said.

On its foreign policy, the statement said the National Salvation Council will serve the promotion of a good neighbourhood, friendship and peace and joining the process of constituting a united Europe, mutual house of all peoples of the Continent.

"We shall respect the international commitments of Romania and mainly the ones concerning Warsaw Pact", it pointed out.

The statement further added that the Council would promote internal and external policy subordinated to the needs and interests of human being's development, full observance of the rights and liberties of man, including right of free travel.

The statement stressed resolve to restore civil society in Romania, guaranteeing triumph of democracy, liberty and dignity of the Romanian people.

It added that in the country, the district, municipal, town and communal councils would be set up as well as councils of National Salvation Front as organs of the local power.

These organs will take the necessary measures to ensure the supply of the population with food, electricity, heat and water, public traffic and medical asistance and the whole commercial network.

The statement listed down forty personalities as members of the National Salvation Council in Romania.

Among those members are Laszlo Tokes, Doinea Cornea, Corneliu Manescu, Ana Blandiana, General Stefan Gusa and General Victor Stan Culescu.

Romanian Embassy Supports 'Uprising'

JN2512122089 Baghdad INA in English
1145 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, Dec 25, INA—The Romanian Embassy in Baghdad expressed joy and satisfaction for the great popular uprising in Romania which "toppled the personal dictatorship of Ceausescu awarding the people the right to democracy and liberty".

In a statement delivered to INA here today, the embassy said the staff of the Romanian diplomatic mission in Baghdad expresses solidarity with the popular movement in Romania, with the actions of the Army forces meant to establish order and calm in Romania.

It added that the mission acts in order to serve the Romanian people to support the ideals of liberty, national independence and the territorial integrity of the country.

The Romanian Embassy statement condemned acts of dictatorship and terror of Nicolae Ceausescu which profoundly affected the spirit of equity and social rightness, of freely expressing the people's ideals. It condemned the actions of oprimation [as received] done against the Romanian people, of opening the fire against the population in Timisoara, Bucharest and other cities of the country.

The statement added that it saw in the setting up of the National Salvation Front the possibility created for the application of the principles of democracy and ensuring the full liberty for the citizens of free Romania.

The Embassy of Romania in Baghdad supports the appeals and decisions taken by the Council of National Salvation Front for the interest of the people as acts with determination for putting them into operation, in order to regain international prestige of Romania worldwide.

Foreign Minister Returns From France 23 Dec

JN2312195889 Baghdad INA in Arabic
1745 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Dec (INA)—Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and the accompanying delegation this evening returned to Baghdad. 'Aziz participated in the Euro-Arab dialogue conference which concluded its meetings in the French capital yesterday.

Jordan's Prince Hasan Arrives on Visit 24 Dec

JN2412131289 Baghdad INA in English
1030 GMT 14 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, Dec 24, INA—Jordanian Crown Prince Hasan Bin-Talal arrived here this moring on an official visit to Iraq.

On his arrival, Prince Hasan was welcomed by Mr 'Izzat Ibrahim, vice-chairman of the Revolution Command Council.

In a press statement on arrival, Prince Hasan said that his mission comes within the framework of consultations and coordination between President Saddam Husayn and King Husayn of Jordan on all regional and international issues, particularly after King Husayn's tour that covered several European countries and the United States.

Prince Hasan praised the brotherly relations between President Saddam Husayn and King Husayn and the sincere cooperation between the two countries and within the framework of Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) to serve the Arab nation's issues.

Prince Hasan said that Jordan is carrying out preparations for holding the (ACC) forthcoming summit scheduled in Amman next February.

Received by President Saddam

JN2412155589 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic
1500 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn this morning received at the Saqr al-Qadisiyah Palace His Highness Prince Hasan Bin-Talal, crown prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. They discussed the strong brotherly relations between the two fraternal countries, the general Arab situation, and issues of mutual interest.

The meeting was attended by 'Izzat Ibrahim, vice chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC], and RCC members Taha Yasin Ramadan, first deputy prime minister; Vice President Taha Muhyi al-Din Ma'ruf; Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; and Sa'dun Shakir. The meeting was also attended by Latif Nusayyif Jasim, minister of culture and information, and the Jordanian ambassador in Baghdad.

Saddam Receives Egypt's 'Abd-al-Majid 25 Dec

JN2512132089 Baghdad INA in Arabic
1235 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, 25 Dec (INA)—President Saddam Husayn received at noon today Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister. 'Abd-al-Majid conveyed to the president an oral message from his brother Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak on the strong bilateral relations between the two sisterly countries, the latest developments in the Arab arena, and issues related to the Arab Cooperation Council.

President Saddam Husayn asked 'Abd-al-Majid to convey his heartfelt greetings to his brother President Muhammad Husni Mubarak.

The meeting was attended by Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and the Egyptian ambassador in Baghdad.

Press Comments on Israel-Iran Deal, U.S. Role

JN2312115489 Baghdad INA in English
1120 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, Dec 23, INA—AL-JUMHURIYAH daily of Baghdad said the Arab nation and Islamic countries are called on to expose new relations between Tehran and Tel Aviv since they endanger pan-Arab security.

A daily article here today said relations between Iran and the Zionist entity were developing since Tel Aviv started providing weapons, intelligence information and despatching military experts for training Iranian troops during the war.

Referring to the new oil deal between the two sides, the daily said that Iraq was right when the war broke out with Iran in September 1980 to the effect that the reason

behind the Iranian intrasigence in abstaining from signing a new peace agreement with Iraq providing for Iran's recognition of Iraq's full sovereignty over Shatt al-'Arab and repatriation of prisoners of war in accordance with the Third Geneva Agreement of 1949, was the Zionist entity which assisted this regime in maintaining such attitude.

The daily further said that the Zionist entity was after establishing strategic relations with Tehran to continue pressure on their sole enemy Iraq.

It further added that when Tel Aviv was aware of Iran's desperate state, it delegated a Zionist official called Auri Luprani to conduct talks with Iranian officials in Switzerland on buying Iranian oil and selling spare parts for Iran.

AL-JUMHURIYAH further said that the Zionist entity attempted to find a new outlet for its allies in Tehran to export their oil following indignation of world countries over their complicity in international terrorism.

This Zionist move was after eliminating economic and political pressures on Iran and to boost its position vis-a-vis Iraq's principled position based on international law and recognition of international organizations sponsorship of implementing Resolution 598 and releasing POW's.

Concluding, the daily said that disclosure of the oil deal came after Iraq's successful launching of a space rocket and developing two missiles with 2000 km range and seems to be as if a reaction on Iraq's scientific accomplishment.

Commenting on the same subject, AL-THAWRAH daily charged the United States of giving the green light to Tel Aviv to conclude the arms deal with Tehran for carrying on its cooperation and compromises with Iran directly or indirectly.

It said that since Iraq's announcement of its great scientific achievement, Zionist and American circles launched feverish propaganda campaign against Iraq to the extent of open threat.

It said that this row clearly reflects concern and fear of this magnificent achievement which embodied Iraq's capability to acquire the most sophisticated technological and scientific links.

It further added that American disclosure of the oil deal between Tehran and Tel Aviv is after magnifying the challenges that would face Iraq following the announcement of its scientific achievement.

The daily, in this respect, referred to the recognition of the U.S State Department that Tel Aviv informed Washington of the oil deal.

It added that Iraq was not astonished about the deal since it was aware of the level of cooperation and coordination between Tehran and Tel Aviv during and after the war.

It said that the Iranian-Zionist alliance was not new and its vicious ends are known to the Arab nation.

It further pointed out that the Zionist raid on Iraq's nuclear reactor in 1981 was part of the dangerous tripartite alliance.

The United States had provided Iran with weapons through the Irangate scandal and which Tel Aviv played a prominent role in it. [sentence as received]

The daily said that the new Iranian-Zionist deal would neither harm Iraq's principled stances and policies nor obstruct its victorious march along the path of civilizational and scientific progress.

The daily said that recent Iranian-U.S agreement in New York which provided for releasing parts of frozen Iranian funds in the United States would not be the last U.S-Iranian deal despite the American talk about Iranian terrorism.

Statement Endorsing Nuclear Treaty Issued

JN2312192689 Baghdad INA in Arabic
1630 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Dec (INA)—Iraq has called on the international community to put pressure on the Zionist entity in order to force it to immediately dispose of its nuclear weapons, subject all its nuclear installations and activities in this field to comprehensive guarantees, and strive to make the Middle East free of nuclear weapons.

In a statement issued by the Foreign Ministry today on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Iraq's endorsement of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, Iraq has welcomed the detente in international relations and the attention paid by the concerned countries to negotiations that aim to reduce arms in all their manifestations in order to arrive at formulas and solutions that can prevent the perils of nuclear armaments and other weapons of destruction from reaching the international community.

The statement added: Motivated by its deep faith in the objectives behind the nuclear nonproliferation treaty and in accordance with its principles, Iraq believes that the most effective guarantees against the possibility of using nuclear weapons and preventing the outbreak of a nuclear war are dismantling nuclear weapons and completely destroying them in order to establish the foundations of a new world free of the means of destruction and to establish the foundations of security and peace for humanity.

The Foreign Ministry statement indicated that, being one of the first countries to endorse the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, Iraq considers nuclear energy a scientific product that can play an important role in supporting the scientific and developmental economic and social fields, and in the service of economic and social progress and development for the various countries of the world.

Iraq recalled the Zionist entity's treacherous air aggression in June 1981 which targeted the nuclear research center designed for peaceful purposes. In UN Security Council Resolution 487 of 1981, the Council considered that aggressive act a serious threat to the principles adopted by the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and a flagrant violation of the International Atomic Energy Agency principles.

In the statement, Iraq also condemned the existing cooperation between the two racist regimes; namely, the Zionist entity and South Africa, indicating that this cooperation confirms their attempts to not only foil efforts by the international community in the context of its ambitions to reduce the proliferation of nuclear weapons, but also to find new places to station nuclear weapons, so they can increase tension, peddle their attempts to possess more means of nuclear destruction, and achieve their agrressive, expansionist objectives.

National Assembly Approves 1990 State Budget

JN2412073889 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1730 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Dec (INA)—The National Assembly this evening held its 22nd session of the second round of meetings for the current year under the chairmanship of National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih.

The session was dedicated to the discussion of the draft unified general state budget for 1990.

The session was attended by Sa'dun Hammadi, Revolution Command Council [RCC] member and deputy prime minister. Also attending were Planning Minister Samal Majid Faraj; Oil Minister 'Isam 'Abd-al-Rahim; Muhammad Mahdi Salih, trade minister and acting finance minister; Husayn Kamil Hasan, minister of trade and military industrialization; Central Bank [of Iraq] [CBI] governor; and representatives from the government's economic and financial sectors.

The National Assembly approved the 1990 general state budget after discussing the individual items of the budget, the consultative plan, the foreign trade plan, the current budget, and the budget of the mixed sector units.

The legal and financial committees pointed out in their reports, which were read out to the Assembly members, that the budget was in line with the ambitions of Iraq in developing industry, agriculture, trade, heavy industry, health, construction, and all the other sectors.

Mr Sa'dun Hammadi, RCC member and deputy prime minister, explained to the National Assembly members the aims which discussion of the budget centered on and the items on the investment, foreign trade, and current budget plans.

The ministers of finance, industry and military industrialization, oil, and planning and the CBI governor answered the queries and clarifications of the Assembly members on the budget.

Further on State Budget

JN2412184889 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1430 GMT 24 Dec 89

[By Faruq Shukri]

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 24 Dec (WAKH)—The Iraqi National Assembly yesterday approved the general state budget for next year which is estimated at around 11.25 billion Iraqi dinars, equivalent to $38 billion.

Dr Sa'dun Hammadi, member of the Revolution Command Council and deputy prime minister, said the state budget for 1990 seeks five objectives: To fight inflation, accelerate development, provide consumer goods, maintain the Armed Forces' fighting capability, and reduce indebtedness.

In a speech to the Assembly, Dr Hammadi pointed out that the new budget is 3.9 percent less than the previous one with the purpose of cutting down on public expenditure. He also said this happens for the first time in Iraq.

It is well known that since the beginning of the war in 1980, the Iraqi Government has refrained from announcing budget allocations, investment program, and foreign trade plan.

Dr Hammadi, who is in charge of economic affairs in Iraq, pointed out that the general budget includes an increase of 1.5 billion Iraqi dinars in allocations for wages. He said that around 4 billion Iraqi dinars are spent on the wages of employees, who number 800,000, and this figure amounts to 36 percent of the budget. He said this is evidence of the existence of hidden unemployment.

Hammadi explained that the plans of the Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialization and of the Ministry of Irrigation were approved in full. He also said that allocations for the industrial sector reached 50.2 percent and for the agricultural sector 16.6 percent. [passage omitted]

Paratroopers Raid 'Terrorist' Targets in Lebanon

TA2612071289 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0700 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Text] A unit of paratroopers raided terrorist targets beyond the security zone in south Lebanon last night. Our troops did not sustain any casualties. Several terrorists, members of the Lebanese Communist Party, were killed, and locations they used to launch attacks in Israel were destroyed.

Our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe notes that the targets are located 17 km north of Hasbayya and that such raids are part of Israeli Army activities to surprise terrorists and disrupt their activities.

IDF Spokesman Releases Details

TA2612113789 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Excerpts] An Israeli Army force this morning attacked terrorist targets in the eastern sector of south Lebanon. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman says all the troops returned safely to base. Alan Ben-'Ami reports:

Israeli paratroopers carried out the operation, attacking bases of the Lebanese Communist Party [LCP] in al-Nabi Safa, almost 20 km beyond the security zone in south Lebanon. The soldiers covered the entire distance on foot, returning back to Israel close to dawn. However, this was a combined operation, with artillery support and tanks backing up the paratroopers. Military sources deny reports from Lebanon that helicopter gunships were also in action or that the soldiers were helicoptered into the attack area, nor did the troops run into any trouble on their way to their targets.

The LCP has been responsible for a string of attacks and terrorist operations against Israeli soldiers and other targets in the south Lebanese security zone.

Two single-story buildings in al-Nabi Safa, a small village north of Hasbayya, were the targets of the raid. They were fortified and used as command centers by the LCP.

The Israeli force took the goals there by surprise, and fighting between the two sides was brief. At least four gunmen are known to have been killed. There were no Israeli casualties. Lebanese sources say two other Lebanese were wounded and three are missing, possibly buried under rubble.

One of the bases was badly damaged in the firefight; the second was blown up by the raiding party before the soldiers withdrew and returned to Israel.

All Planes Return Safely After Raid North of Sidon

TA2612161389 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1603 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Excerpt] Our Army affairs correspondent, 'Amos Har'el, has just entered with some news: Israel Air Force planes this afternoon raided terrorist targets north of Sidon. All our planes returned safely to base. The destroyed target served the Lebanese Communist Party terrorist organization.

Rabin Denies 'Direct Contacts' With Iran

TA2612161089 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Report by Knesset correspondent Dov Gilhar]

[Excerpts] The oil deal with Iran had been conducted without any parliamentary supervision, Eliyahu Ben-Elisar, chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, revealed today. It appears that the defense establishment kept the fact of the oil deal with Iran, and several significant portions of contacts for the release of hostages, from the Intelligence Subcommittee. The information was concealed despite an explicit commitment the defense establishment made when the Irangate affair was exposed, according to which the subcommittee is to be briefed on all Israeli contacts with Iranian elements.

At the committee meeting this morning, Eliyahu Ben-Elisar vented his anger at the defense minister. How is it possible for the committee to hear of the deal from NBC, asked Ben-Elisar, who fears that other sensitive security issues are being concealed from the subcommittee. [passage omitted]

Emerging from the meeting, the defense minister was asked why the defense establishment had concealed the oil deal with Iran from the subcommittee.

[Begin Rabin recording] It is the nature of such things that utmost secrecy is required. Therefore, I will not be more explicit. But I can safely say the following: There are at present and there were in the past no direct contacts between Israel and Iran. [end recording]

Reportage on Reaction to Events in Romania

State To Send Humanitarian Aid

TA2312153089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Excerpt] In response to appeals from Romania, Israel has decided to send medical and humanitarian assistance there.

A Foreign Ministry spokesma[illegible]ur correspondent that this was decided in acc[illegible]e with a request submitted by the Foreign Ministry in Bucharest to the Israeli Embassy in the Romanian capital. [passage omitted]

Arens Urges 'Extreme Caution'

TA2312202089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Foreign Minister Moshe Arens believes that Israel should exercise extreme caution in its reaction to the situation in Romania because many Israelis are currently staying there, tens of thousands of Jews live in that country, and the immigration route used by Soviet Jewry passes through Romania.

Our correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that Minister Arens made this statement at a convention of academics belonging to the Likud Party.

Organizations To Send Aid

TA2312204489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Excerpt] The Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem has announced that Israel has decided to respond to the request submitted by the Health Ministry in Bucharest and send medical assistance to Romania. Experts from the Israeli Health Ministry are currently organizing shipments of medicines and medical supplies. The Magen David Adom first aid service is preparing a list of doctors and nurses that will be ready to leave for Romania. Aid centers and action committees have been established in many settlements throughout Israel to collect medicines and equipment, and many organizations, including the National Doctors Association and NA'AMAT [Alignment-affiliated women's labor federation] have organized to extend assistance to Romania.

The Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem has established an information center for those who wish to make inquiries regarding the fate of their relatives in Romania. [passage omitted]

Arens Adviser 'Welcomes' Regime

TA2412112689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Israel welcomes the establishment of a democratic regime in Romania and wishes a life of freedom and prosperity for the Romanian people. Israel condemns the horrible massacre in Romania and regrets the loss of thousands of human lives, Foreign Minister Arens' adviser Dani Nave told our political correspondent Arye Golan.

According to Rave, Israel hopes for the bloodshed to stop soon and for a stable, democratic regime to be established in Romania. Israel also hopes that Romanian Jews will come to no harm and that their well-being, as well as that of the rest of the country, will be safeguarded. The Foreign Ministry is in contact with the Romanian ambassador in Israel and the Foreign Ministry in Bucharest to coordinate the expedition of medical and humanitarian aid. The aid will be sent as soon as the conditions needed to fly it to Bucharest are created.

Rave went on to state that Israel will continue to develop relations of friendship and cooperation with the Romanian people and their leaders.

Foreign Ministry Defends Statement

TA2512073989 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 25 Dec 89 pp 1, 8

[Report by diplomatic correspondent Menahem Shalev and Dan Petreanu]

[Excerpts] Israel yesterday welcomed the emergence of democracy, condemned the massacres, and expressed hope for the establishment of a stable government in Romania.

The Foreign Ministry deflected criticism of its statement, which some described as "tepid," saying that its condemnation of the massacres was unequivocal and that the practice of Israeli foreign policy is to refrain from explicit recognition of new regimes and governments. [passage omitted]

The sources [not further identified] noted that it is maintaining normal contacts with the Romanian Ambassador, who has publicly expressed his allegiance to the National Salvation Front.

The sources added that since it was "universally known" that the massacres in Romania were carried out by forces loyal to deposed President Nicolae Ceusescu, "there was no need to mention this fact."

The sources denied that Isreal's past friendly relations with Ceausescu may have something to do with the moderate language of the statement.

One official added, however, that while no one in Jerusalem expects Ceausescu to return to power in Bucharest, "it may be more prudent to let the dust settle" before Israel takes a more straightforward public posture. The safety of the Jews, he added, is also a factor to be considered.

Dan Petreanu adds:

Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu said yesterday that Israel "already sees Romania as a democratic country."

Addressing 500 Likud-affiliated students last night, Netanyahu said: "We never supported the dictatorship, but we were interested in bringing out the Jews of Romania and we wanted to preserve the conduit Ceausescu provided us to Eastern Europe. A democratic Romania is in our interest."

Netanyahu said that Israel wants to send a medical aid team, but that this is being delayed by the battles raging in Romania.

Minister Moshe Qatzav warned that the fall of Ceausescu could lead to a "rise in anti-Semitism and Romanian nationalism."

Attack on Embassy in Bucharest Denied

TA2412161489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] French radio reported this evening that the Israeli Embassy in Bucharest was attacked by armed persons who may be Arabs. The Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem, however, said this report was groundless. [passage omitted]

Arens on Recognition of Government

TA2412185089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Report on interview with Foreign Minister Moshe Arens by Jack Katzenell on 24 December; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Katzenell] I asked Foreign Minister Moshe Arens for his reaction to the events of the past 48 hours in Romania.

[Arens] Well, in Romania we see another act, and maybe the last act, in the countries of Eastern Europe moving from totalitarian rule to democracy; first Hungary, then Poland, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, maybe in a more gradual manner the Soviet Union and Bulgaria—and the last 2 days is Romania. It is just unfortunate that whereas in the other countries this change was not accompanied by any violence, in Romania the lives of thousands of people have been lost in the process.

[Katzenell] In Israel's view, what is the legal government in Romania now?

[Arens] I do not think that this is a legal question. From what I hear in the news reports, Ceausescu's people do not rule Romania anymore.

[Katzenell] Does this mean that Israel recognizes the democratic government of Romania?

[Arens] You know we have never had to take any positions in recognizing the changed governments in either Hungary or Poland or Czechoslovakia. Israel is a believer in the universality of diplomatic relations and we recognize and have relations with whatever group is in power in a country. From the looks of it, Ceausescu is not in power anymore in Romania.

[Katzenell] So this means that, de facto, Israel recognizes the democratic government?

[Arens] Have we ever recognized the democratic government in the CSSR? [sentence as heard].

[Katzenell] Professor Arens added that Israel had to be very careful about its public statements during the fighting for fear that the Ceausescu forces might take revenge on the thousands of Jews living in Romania, and a Foreign Ministry source told me this afternoon that it is difficult for Israel to make a formal act of recognition until the Committee for National Salvation declares itself the official government of Romania.

Envoy on Contacts With New Government

TA2612171289 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Telephone interview with Ambassador to Romania Tzvi Mazel by Shmu'el Rosner "a short time ago"—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Mazel] All the Israelis and their families—the Embassy staff, Zim shipping company, and El Al representatives—are safe. [passage omitted]

[Rosner] We heard today that a new government has been formed in Romania. Have you established contacts with these people yet?

[Mazel] Yes. The government was established a few hours ago and is not complete yet. There have been only some preliminary appointments made by the National Salvation Front. I imagine the rest of the government will be appointed in the course of the week. It is natural for a new government to begin functioning gradually, particularly in view of the fact that unlike other East European countries, no clear-cut political forces existed here.

[Rosner] Has the Israeli Embassy held any contacts with the people of the new regime?

[Mazel] Certainly, certainly. Since yesterday, we have been maintaining contacts with the new regime through the Foreign Ministry, which has begun operating. We have been both relaying and receiving messages. [passage omitted]

[Rosner] We are particularly interested in their attitude toward Israel. Do you know anything about the attitude we can expect?

[Mazel] Look, my first contacts have been good. There have been traditionally friendly relations between us, and there is no reason for them to stop. [passage omitted]

Peres Postpones USSR Visit; No New Date Set

TA2612053789 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Text] Vice Premier Shim'on Peres has postponed his visit to the Soviet Union without setting a new date. A Voice of Israel reporter says Peres made the decision because his planned meetings with senior officials had not been finalized.

Only yesterday the Soviet Peace Committee, which extended the invitation to Peres to visit the Soviet Union, announced that the trip would take place beginning 1 January [as heard].

U.S. 'Double Standards' on Panama, Palestine

TA2212134289 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 22 Dec 89 p 2

[Editorial: "The United States' Double Standards"]

[Text] Noriega's head will decide whether President Bush will strengthen his position or become involved in a situation similar to that in which President John Kennedy found himself after the abortive Bay of Pigs operation. Israel still remembers the U.S. reprimand after the kidnapping of Shaykh 'Ubayd. The double standards under which the United States operates have not prevented it from taking an aggressive move after castigating Israel for a much less important action.

The United States showed determination in taking action in its "backyard"—but it is doubtful that Israel can use a similar argument when it tries to reject the establishment of a Palestinian state in its backyard.

It seems that the United States has found itself sinking into a quagmire it did not foresee. The Palestinian issue, to the Israeli Government's satisfaction, will probably get a time-out.

3 Dead in Territories; Hamas Cancels Strike

TA2212130289 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Excerpts] Three residents were killed in the territories today. A 13-year-old youth died this morning in the al-Maqasid Hospital in East Jerusalem of wounds sustained about 4 months ago. His relatives claimed that he had been shot by Israeli civilians.

This morning, al-Maqasid hospital also received a critically wounded resident of Hebron. It was learned that he had been wounded in clashes with soldiers. [passage omitted]

Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] has canceled the strike it had slated for Christmas, after the intention to stage a strike aroused much anger in Christian circles in the territories.

Court Sentences 'Terrorist' for Throwing Grenade

TA2512171589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] The military court sentenced Samir Salah Sarsawi, a terrorist from the Galilee village of Ibtin, to life imprisonment. Sarsawi was the leader of a five-member Fatah squad that threw a grenade in a pedestrian mall in Haifa over a year ago. Our correspondent Yisra'el Peretz points out that 25 people, 7 of them members of 1 family, were wounded in the attack.

AL-FAJR Editor Makes 'Surprise Visit' to Jordan

TA2412111089 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 24 Dec 89 p 6

[ITIM Report]

[Text] Hanna Sinyurah, the editor of the East Jerusalem newspaper AL-FAJR, left on a surprise visit to Jordan across the Allenby bridge at the end of last week.

For many years the Jordanian authorities prevented Sinyurah from entering their country, but they have now dropped the ban.

East Jerusalem sources said that Sinyurah's visit to Jordan comes in the wake of that of PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat and the resumption of Jordanian-Palestinian coordination.

House Approves Cables on U.S. Move in Panama

JN2412123889 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1210 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] The House of Representatives today approved the House Foreign Relations Committee recommendation to send a cable to the United Nations and other parties concerned denouncing the recent U.S. military intervention in Panama as a violation of all international laws and conventions.

Denounces U.S. 'Intervention'

JN2412183489 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Excerpt] At this morning's session of the House of Representatives chaired by Speaker Sulayman 'Arar and attended by Prime Minister Mudar Badran and cabinet ministers, the members of the House's temporary committees were elected and a number of laws and proposals were discussed and referred to specialized committees.

Prime Minister Badran spoke during the session about a number of issues brought up by the deputies during the discussion. Commenting on demands from deputies, he announced that he had told the cabinet in a meeting last night not to seek the opinion of the security organs in regard to the employment of any citizen. The cabinet, he said, took notice of this, and the decision was actually applied when appointments at ministries and state departments and establishments were made.

Replying to a request, the prime minister said that the government is now carefully studying the cases of convicts and that it may need some time, as there are interrelated crimes here, all constituting violations of the law; the question is not that of political affiliations. He added: Up to this moment, I do not know of any political detainee held at security organs since several detainees were released. I will personally follow up on any names given by the deputies in pursuance of the government's commitment in this regard.

At the beginning of the session, the House decided to send a cable of congratulations to the Palestinian Arab people on Christmas and the New Year. The House expressed hope that by next Christmas the goals of the mammoth popular intifadah will be achieved and so will be our struggling people's goals of establishing their independent state on their national soil under the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The House denounced the U.S. military intervention in Panama and called on the U.S. Armed Forces to withdraw from Panamanian territory.

The House called for a halt to Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union and East European countries as this emigration endangers the Palestinian people's aspiration to liberation and self-determination and harms relations between the Eastern bloc and the Arab countries. [passage omitted]

Al-Masri Tables Proposal

JN2512123989 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 25 Dec 89 p 3

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Nirmin Murad]

[Text] Amman—The condemnation issued Sunday by the Lower House of Parliament of the American invasion of Panama is based on the adherence by the Jordanian parliament to international norms and practices, according to deputy Tahir al-Masri, who tabled the proposal at the House.

The House position was manifested in telegrams it sent to United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar and U.S. President George Bush condemning the "U.S. military intervention in Panama, especially that Panama is an independent country and a member of the United Nations."

The American action, according to the one page telegram, "violates international laws and the dignity of the U.N." The House called for "the immediate withdrawal of American troops from Panama."

Al-Masri, who made the proposal five minutes into the seventh regular session of the house, told the JORDAN TIMES that "the principle of (military) interventions was wrong."

"We know who (Manuel Antonio) Noriega is," al-Masri said. "He is a bum, but we are not defending the man, we are defending international principles," al-Masri said.

According to al-Masri, who, served as Jordan's foreign minister under two different prime ministers, "the U.S. cannot keep adopting unilateral actions. It hit Libya (in 1985) and now it has attacked Panama. This cannot continue."

Al-Masri believes that the American intervention in South America comes as part of a larger policy to "rearrange its affairs in the countries around it now that its influence in Europe has diminished in face of Western European unity."

"I personally think that we will now start seeing changes in South America, triggered by the U.S., to adapt to the United States' general policies," al-Masri said.

The resolution tabled by al-Masri was adopted unanimously but not before Ahmad 'Uwaydi al-'Abbadi, a deputy from Amman, interjected: "What does Jordan have to do with Panama?" But, his remark was brushed aside by other deputies.

The Jordanian condemnaton of the American action in Panama was mostly in line with the positions by the international community. However, the U.S., France

and Britain Saturday vetoed a United Nations Security Council resolution condemning the action.

USIA Magazine, U.S. Panama Involvement Attacked

JN2512102889 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 25 Dec 89 p 10

["Something" column by Fakhri Qa'war, AL-RA'Y columnist and Amman deputy in House of Representatives: "In the U.S. Sphere"]

[Text] A nice 32-page magazine—with glossy pages and excellent printing—called AL-MAJAL is being distributed free to the people in our country "to promote understanding and friendship between the people of the United States and the peoples of the Arab countries." Every time I read this magazine, I notice that it tries to promote America to the Arab peoples, impress us with the American superman and power, and frighten us with this superpower, which does not cease to strike at small peoples throughout the globe with its club.

AL-MAJAL magazine, published by the United States Information Agency [USIA], claims that "the views expressed in the issue are those of the individual authors only." The strange thing is that those who write in AL-MAJAL try to convey to our mind—intentionally or unintentionally—the American model, so that its spirit will continue to dominate us and so that we will continue to raise our gaze upward, as America is in a superior position, until our necks are broken. Despite this, AL-MAJAL magazine asserts without any doubt that "it does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the United States."

Things being as they are, what is the purpose of USIA issuing AL-MAJAL? And, if it does not reflect the American policy directly, it reflects it indirectly, because of the clear emphasis on general political trends, liberal thinking, and presentation of the bright side of American life in terms of culture, society, arts, literature, creativeness, and international relations.

If AL-MAJAL magazine believes that understanding between the Arab and American people already exists and only needs promotion, the USIA is duty-bound to realize that the frank U.S. support for the Zionist occupation leaves no room for understanding, and that there cannot be understanding under the umbrella of "the veto." This agency must know that AL-MAJAL is so weak that it cannot achieve or promote understanding between our Arab people and the American people, because the situation needs wise political decisions on the part of the U.S. Administration before it needs a magazine like AL-MAJAL.

The U.S. image in the mind of the Arab citizen is ugly, because the United States has left no stone unturned in reinforcing this image, whether by standing on the side of the enemies of this nation or by standing against the peoples of the world and overlooking their national dignity. And the best evidence of this is what the U.S. forces did and are still doing in the independent, sovereign Republic of Panama, which is now being trampled by more than 22,000 U.S. soldiers.

I say to the USIA and AL-MAJAL magazine that the only way to understanding between the Arab people and America is by standing on the side of our legitimate rights and championing us in the international arena. And AL-MAJAL magazine cannot establish understanding or promote a single thing, no matter how small.

Romanian Ambassador Joins Rally To Back Revolt

JN2512100789 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 25 Dec 89 p 3

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Nirmin Murad]

[Text] Amman—Over 100 peaceful demonstrators carried candles and chanted Romanian songs to express their support for the Romanian revolution and their solidarity with the Nation Salvation Front, which took over after a people's revolt toppled hardline Communist leader Nicolae Ceausescu this week.

The Romanian community in Jordan, which numbers over 700 Romanians, mostly women, also expressed its sorrow at the large number of deaths during the revolution which started in earnest Friday.

"We decided to meet here to burn candles for the people who died there, especially the children," Stela al-Sabbagh, a Romanian native married to a Jordanian, told the JORDAN TIMES outside the Romanian embassy in Jabal Luwaybdeh.

Al-Sabbagh also said that Romanians living in Jordan were trying to find a way to help their compatriots. "Maybe we can donate blood or money... we are proud of our people," she said.

Romania's ambassador to Jordan, Dumitru Stanescu, joined the demonstrators in their celebrations and pledged his allegiance to the National Salvation Front. He said that Romania was now "living a historical moment. The Ceausescu gang, who lead the country to disaster, has been eliminated from power."

He told the JORDAN TIMES in a brief interview at the footsteps of the embassy that the Foreign Ministry in Bucharest had supported the revolution and expressed its support for the National Salvation Front.

"Our Foreign Ministry has already sent a message to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan expressing its firm decision to act for the implementation of the front's policy... in a manner which would establish and affirm the dignity and the aspiration of freedom, friednship, peace and international understanding," the ambassador said.

Several women among the demonstrators wept openly as speeches were made denouncing of [as published] Ceausescu and praising the Romanian people. Almost of the

women and men interviewed said they were very surprised that there was a revolution at all.

"I personally thought they were cowards because they were always silent... but not now... now I know that they are very brave people," al-Sabbagh said.

One woman maintained that she had expected change in Romania and said that she was surprised at the timing of the revolution.

"It came very quickly, I couldn't believe it."

Asked whether the embassy expected the revolution, Stanescu evaded giving a direct answer. "The evolution of any society requires chance and development and this is what happened in Romania," he said.

The Romanian crowd, joined by Jordanians who have studied in the East European country, carried banners hailing Romania's freedom and condemning Ceausescu as "a kid's killer."

There are more than 6,000 Jordanians who attended University in Romania since 1974.

The new programme of the Romanian government covers a series of measures aimed at assuring the populations with public and political freedoms as well securing basic services and food for the people of Romania.

The programme includes proposals to abolish the leading role in a single party and the establishment of a pluralist democratic system of government, the organisation of a free elections in the month of April, and the separation of the legislative, executive and judicial authorities.

Foreign Minister Returns From Euro-Arab Parley

JN2312193589 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Marwan al-Qasim, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, returned to Amman this evening after representing Jordan at the Euro-Arab ministerial conference which convened in Paris on 21 December at the initiative of French President Francois Mitterrand with the object of reactivating the Arab-European dialogue.

Hasan Returns After Delivering Message to Saddam

JN2412152889 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1500 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Amman, 24 Dec (PETRA)—His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, returned to Amman this afternoon following a short working visit to the Republic of Iraq during which he conveyed an oral message from His Majesty King Husayn to his brother His Excellency President Saddam Husayn. The message dealt with the framework of coordination and consultation between the two Arab leaders on all regional and international issues.

Amal, Hizballah Fighters Clash in Iqlim al-Tuffah

Clashes Begin 23 Dec

NC2312092189 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Clashes between Amal Movement and Hizballah fighters on the combat lines of al-Mujaydil, Kafr Hatta, Kafr Milki have been reported, Kafr Fila, 'Ayn Qana, Jarju' and Sarba in Iqlim al-Tuffah villages since dawn today.

Our correspondent reports that the citizens have suffered an undetermined number of casualties and that Hasan Husayn Hamzah of al-Mujaydil was killed and taken to Hammud Hospital in Sidon.

Amal 'Offensive' Contained

NC2312094189 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0930 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] An official source with the Islamic resistance has stated the following: At 0530 today the Amal Movement launched an offensive on a broad front against the Islamic resistance positions in Jba' and 'Ayn Bu Siwar. It prepared for the attack by directing a fierce artillery and rocket bombardment designed to liquidate the strongholds and strugglers of the resistance. The strugglers were compelled to respond to the attack. They succeeded in containing it. The battles are continuing.

5 Killed, 35 Wounded

NC2312103589 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Violent battles involving artillery and rockets are continuing between Amal and Hizballah gunmen in Iqlim al-Tuffah.

Security sources have indicated that Hizballah gunmen are trying to advance from Jba' on the Kafr Fila axis. Meanwhile, fierce clashes are raging on the eastern and southern lines in 'Ayn Bu Siwar, 'Ayn Qana, Jarju'. Amal is pushing reinforcements to the area through the Sarba, Humin, 'Ayn Qana, Kafr Hatta, Kafr Milki, and Kafr Fila lines.

Both sides have suffered casualties in the clashes that have been going on since this morning. Casualties included Hasan Husayn Hamzah, who has been taken to the Hammud Hospital in Sidon.

REUTER reported that 5 people have been killed and 35 others wounded.

Many people have been moving out of these areas in the direction of Sidon and Tyre.

Amal, Hizballah Statements

NC2312114589 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1030 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Fierce clashes are continuing in Iqlim al-Tuffah. REUTER reports that 5 persons were killed and 30 others were wounded. The dead include Hasan Husayn Hamzah.

An official source of Amal media has issued a statement saying: Hizballah sources have distributed a statement containing fabrications and allegations about attacks which the Amal Movement is carrying out against what is described as the Islamic resistance positions. The fact is that Hizballah gunmen launched a wide-scale attack this morning against the Iqlim al-Tuffah area from Jba' and other positions and they advanced in the direction of 'Ayn Qana and Kafr Fila. The movement's forces and inhabitants have stopped all the attacks. In the meantime, many townships in the south are being shelled heavily and several persons have been killed or wounded.

The statement adds: The Amal Movement, which has fully adhered to the Damascus agreement and maintained silence about the aggression against eastern al-Biqa' and the explosions in Beirut and its suburb out of a desire to nip the sedition in the bud, continues to abide by this stand. The source added that the Amal Movement believes that the time factor still favors ending the sedition and avoiding the massacre against the south and the real resistance of the Israseli occupation. It calls on the officials to consider the situation.

The Hizballah information unit has in turn issued a statement appealing to all concerned and to the Islamic and nationalist forces to help defuse the situation in Iqlim al-Tuffah and stop the arrests and displacement campaigns. The statement expresses readiness to discuss anything at the negotiating table in order to reach the best formula for implementing the Damascus agreement in order to avert the major catastrophe which is threatening our area.

Hizballah Controls '90 Percent' of Area

NC2312151789 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] We begin our cast with the Amal-Hizballah conflict in the south, where the military operations between the two parties are still in progress. According to an updated account of the situation, Hizballah is 90 percent in control of the following areas where the fighting is taking place: 'Ayn Bu Siwar, Sarba, Kafr Fila, and Mlita. While Hizballah is reported to be launching attacks in Jba' toward 'Arab Salim, 'Ayn Qana, and al-Mujaydal, security sources said that the Amal Movement moved its command centers from Iqlim al-Tuffah to the rear positions. Amal sources said the movement's command center in Zifta was moved to 'Adlun.

Qabalan on Syrian Involvement

NC2312123189 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Ja'farite Mufti Shaykh 'Abd-al-Amir Qabalan has been cited as saying that he expects the current battle between Amal and Hizballah to be the last one. He said that there are three established facts: A major war is bound to take place between Amal Movement and Hizballah in any Shiite area under Syrian occupation or in the areas between al-Zahrani and the border strip; Hizballah insists on returning to the south whatever the price; and the Syrian Government is instigating the fighting between the two parties.

Iran's Besharati To Mediate

NC2312182789 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Excerpts] At 0530 today, fierce fighting involving rockets, mortars, and automatic weapons broke out on the Jba', Kafr Fila, 'Ayn Qana, and al-Mujaydil combat lines between the Amal Movement and Hizballah. The two sides blamed each other for starting this fighting. The fierce fighting was still continuing this afternoon. The shelling hit a number of villages and reached Humin al-Tahta.

According to a security report, the shelling left 15 civilians wounded, including two children and a number of women, in the villages of Kafr Hatta, Kafr Milki, and Sarba. REUTER reported that 5 people were killed and 30 others were wounded. [passage omitted]

Security reports emphasized that no change has taken place in positions. However, the reports noted at 1545 today that the fighting was continuing with various types of weapons on the Mujaydil, Kafr Hatta, Kafr Milki, Kafr Kila, 'Ayn Qana, and Sarba combat lines. The reports indicated a heavy exodus of people leaving the areas of the fighting for safer areas.

[In its report on the Amal-Hizballah fighting, Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic at 1715 GMT on 23 December adds the following on casualty figures: "The ferocious fighting now raging has left 16 dead and 47 injured, according to an initial count."

Tehran International Service in Arabic at 1730 GMT on 23 December gives this version of the situation: "Ten people were killed and 30 others injured in Amal-Hizballah fighting today. Large numbers of inhabitants of Iqlim al-Tuffah and neighboring villages left their areas during the fighting for safer areas in the South. Intensive contacts have begun in Damascus between Hizballah and Amal Movement officials. A number of Hizballah officials, Amal Movement leader Nabih Birri, and Shaykh Muhammad Shams al-Din, deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shiite Council in Lebanon, held talks in Damascus with Syrian officials and members of the Islamic Republic's Embassy.

"Brother 'Ali Besharati, Iranian Foreign Ministry under secretary, left for Damascus today at the head of a political delegation to discuss the recent clashes between Hizballah and the Amal Movement in Lebanon. Brother Besharati will exert efforts during this visit to bring about unity and cohesiveness between the Islamic forces and the Lebanese struggle groups. He will also meet with Syrian officials to discuss the fighting and latest developments in the Lebanese issue."]

Fighting Resumes 24 Dec

NC2412090889 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0845 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Clashes between the Amal Movement and Hizballah erupted again on the Jba', Kafr Fila, and 'Ayn Qana battle lines this morning. The combatants are using rockets and machineguns in the fighting.

Meanwhile, meetings are continuing in an effort to bring the situation under control. Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad 'Ali Besharati is due to meet with Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din in Damascus. Amal Leader Nabih Birri met with Besharati yesterday.

Hizballah Issues Cease-Fire Statement

NC2412072989 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Hizballah's decision to observe a cease-fire in Iqlim al-Tuffah apparently led to an abatement of the clashes as of 2000 yesterday. However, Amal fighters did not adhere to the cease-fire and clashes continued on more than one battle line, although relatively less compared to yesterday.

Last night Hizballah issued the following statement: Proceeding from our concern to preserve our Islamic arena, to reaffirm the principles we have long observed, to safeguard our wronged people who are suffering the oppression of the Zionist enemy, and to guarantee the people's security and peace, we declare our unilateral adherence to a comprehensive cease-fire in Iqlim al-Tuffah as of 2000 [on 23 December]. We hope that we will find a full response to this initiative in order to calm the situation and return to the language of dialogue on a basis of full commitment to the agreements concluded between us and the Amal Movement and the implementation of all of their provisions.

Despite Hizballah's cease-fire decision, Islamic resistance positions in Jba', 'Ayn Bu Siwar, Mlita, and al-Luwayzah have continued to be the targets of artillery bombardment from Amal positions. Some violent clashes are also taking place.

The fighting began at approximately 0500 yesterday when Hizballah positions came under violent attack. Hizballah fighters succeeded in repulsing the attacks and controlled the villages of Kafr Milki, Kafr Fila, 'Ayn Qana, Jarju', al-Mujaydil, and Kafr Hatta.

The Amal Movement moved its headquarters from Zifta to Tyre.

Intermittent Shelling Continues

NC2412094689 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Tension reigns in the areas which were the scene of fighting between Amal and Hizballah gunmen in Iqlim al-Tuffah. According to security sources, intermittent shelling was resumed on the Kafr Fila, 'Ayn Qana and Jba' combat lines this morning. The bloody clashes between the two sides yesterday left 20 dead and more than 50 injured.

Commenting on the current events in Iqlim al-Tuffah, Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss said today: The regrettable incidents in Iqlim al-Tuffah in the south make our hearts bleed. All the people view them as a war without a cause. Indeed, in effect they are tantamount to a war against the national cause which the two warring sides are committed to and believe in. We will not be overstepping the facts if we say that they are suicidal.

Al-Huss added: The fighting in the south between those who are supposed to be in the same trench to confront the continuing Israeli aggression against southern Lebanon is an unforgivable crime against man, people, and the homeland. Therefore, we appeal to both sides to come to their senses, listen to their consciences, and stop the fighting immediately.

Amal, Hizballah Trade Accusations

NC2412105789 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1030 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] According to the latest security reports, clashes involving of machineguns, rockets, and artillery are continuing between Amal and Hizballah elements in Iqlim al-Tuffah. Amal sources told our radio a short time ago that the most violent clashes are on the combat lines of 'Ayn Qana, Jba', Kafr Fila, and Kafr Milki. The same sources added that Hizballah elements are pounding the townships of Kafr Milki and Kafr Hitta from positions in Jba'.

Amal sources, who stated that al-Mujaydil township is still under the movement's control, have accused Hizballah of violating the cease-fire. They said that the clashes resumed at 0700 this morning and that they are continuing.

Hizballah in turn has accused Amal Movement of pounding the townships of Jba', 'Ayn Biswar, 'Ayn Qana, Kafr Fila, Jarju', al- Luwayzah, Mlita axis, and Safi. Hizballah sources told our radio that the Hizballah adheres to the cease-fire.

Cease-Fire Reportedly Takes Hold

LD2412102389 Tehran IRNA in English 0855 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Damascus, Dec. 24, IRNA—Ceasefire went into effect between the forces of Lebanon's Amal movement and Hizballah at 20:00 hours GMT Saturday after meetings between leaders of the two warring groups at the presence of the visiting first deputy foreign minister of Iran, 'Ali Mohammad Besharati.

In meetings with Amal-Hizballah leaders here Saturday afternoon, Besharati conveyed a message from leader of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i urging the two Muslim groups to end hostilities and to understanding [as received].

Speaking to IRNA at the end of the Amal-Hizballah meeting, an Amal leader Shaykh Muhammad Yozbek said that the two sides must be deeply concerned with the dangers threatening Lebanon from inside and outside. He warned that the two Muslim groups by becoming engaged in clashes were kept away from countering conspiracies against Muslims in Lebanon.

Besharati arrived here Saturday afternoon to submit a message from President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and to meet with Amal-Hizballah leaders. He is to discuss Tehran-Damascus ties as well as the latest regional developments.

Iran strongly deplores any clash between Islamic groups in Lebanon, he told IRNA in an interview upon arrival here. He added that such clashes prevented the Muslim forces from encountering their true enemy—the Zionist regime.

'Intensity' of Fighting Abates

NC2412154589 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] It has been reported that the intensity of the fighting which took place in the Iqlim al-Tuffah area between the Amal Movement and Hizballah has abated. The fighting left at least 20 people dead and more than 50 others wounded.

Security sources have said that Hizballah and Amal fighters are reinforcing their positions in a number of important villages in the area. Despite the call for a cease-fire, the sources said that the sound of machinegun fire and intermittent shelling was heard today.

Palestinians Said Aiding Hizballah

NC2412180289 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Nasirite Popular Organization sources in Sidon have stated that approximately 200 pro-'Arafat Palestinians entered the camps of 'Ayn al-Hulwah and al-Miyah wa Miyah via the sea last night and set up positions in the camps. They arrived in small boats. The sources said

that some of these Palestinians have gone to Iqlim al-Tuffah to help Hizballah in its battles against the Amal Movement.

Amal Issues Statement

NC2412181389 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] An Amal Movement leader has said that Hizballah seeks to link its strongholds in the al-Biqa' valley with Iqlim al-Tuffah and the east Sidon area. He added: It has been noticed that Palestinian groups, deployed east of Sidon, were helping Hizballah to bring reinforcements to some villages in Iqlim al-Tuffah through areas under Palestinian control. He continued: The Amal Movement has decided to regain all areas captured by Hizballah. Seven Amal Movement members are missing and the residents of most of the villages where the fighting occurred have left.

Meanwhile, the Amal Movement's central information bureau today issued the following statement: For the second day in a row, Hizballah's armed groups have continued to carry out attacks in the south. Hizballah has spread misleading information to the effect that its positions have come under attack, that advances have been made toward new positions, and that a unilateral cease-fire was declared.

Jarju' and Kafr Milki have been coming under heavy artillery shelling since this morning. A number of abortive attempts have been made to capture them. The Amal Movement forces and the residents continue to repulse all attacks. The villages adjacent to the attacked area have come under intermittent shelling and sniping with heavy-caliber weapons. The shelling and sniper fire hit the houses and the main streets of these villages, causing property damage. Hizballah groups also continued to bring in armed reinforcements.

What took place before and during the past 2 days confirms that Hizballah groups are carrying out a phased military aggression against the south, its people, and its resisting history, using propaganda to try to convince the public that they are seeking to end the fighting.

The Amal Movement reaffirms its known positions on what is happening. These are:
1. The aim of this futile war is to divert the attention of the Amal Movement and the honorable nationalist and Islamic forces which are concerned with the resistance, the liberation of the land, and with resisting the separatist movement led by 'Awn.
2. The aim of these groups is to divide the Islamic and national ranks and create a political rift. This will give enemies of Lebanon's unity a chance to continue establishing isolated Israel-type states.
3. The Amal Movement, which is still in a position of legitimate self-defense, emphasizes its desire to nip the strife in the bud and hopes the misled will repent and stop their aggression against the south and its people.

Fadlallah Urges End to Fighting

NC2412121589 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] 'Allamah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah met with 'Abdallah al-Amin, regional secretary of the Ba'th Party Organization in Lebanon. After the meeting, during which they discussed the Amal-Hizballah clashes, Fadlallah urged putting an end to the fighting because it serves only Israel.

Israeli Commandos Raid LCP Position in East

Al-Nabi Safi Attacked; Casualties Noted

NC2612100189 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 0930 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Text] At dawn today, Lebanese Communist Party [LCP] fighters waged a ferocious fight against an Israeli force which was landed by helicopter near a party position in al-Nabi Safa, north of Libbaya. The landing was conducted under cover of intensive artillery bombardment, helicopter raids, and attempted advances by 12 armored vehicles. Two party members were martyred and two others injured in the confrontation which lasted about 2 hours. There have been no immediate reports on the invading forces' losses.

Further on Casualties, Fighting

NC2612090589 Paris AFP in English 0849 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Text] Rashayya, Lebanon, Dec 26 (AFP)—Israeli commandos attacked a Lebanese Communist Party base in Syrian-controlled eastern Lebanon on Tuesday, killing at least two guerrillas and wounding two others, party officials said. The commandos were dropped into the area by helicopter around dawn. At least three other guerrillas were missing.

The attack was confirmed in Jerusalem by a military spokesman who said the base had been used for "terrorist operations" against the Israeli army and its allied South Lebanon Army militia.

The commandos returned safely and were congratulated on their mission by Israel's northern military commander, General Yosi Peled.

More than 100 Israeli soldiers in a dozen military vehicles, backed by artillery and four helicopters, swept through the region along a 15-kilometre (10-mile) front in a simultaneous three-hour operation, Lebanese sources said.

The base of the Communist Party, a pro-Syrian secular group that mounts anti-Israeli raids in south Lebanon, was near Kfar Mishki in the al-Biqa' valley, 12 kilometres (seven miles) north of Israel's "security zone" along the Lebanese border. The region also has Syrian and Lebanese Army positions and the pro-Iranian Hizballah headquarters.

Israeli helicopters fired missiles at two Lebanese Army positions near the village of Libbaya, held by pro-Iranian fundamentalists, according to military sources in the region.

The three-pronged Israeli operation came amid clashes between Hizballah and its Shiite rival, the pro-Syrian Amal group, that erupted four days earlier in the Iqlim al-Tuffah region, 15 kilometres (10 miles) further west.

Amal Radio on Raid

NC2612085689 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 0830 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Text] A heroic confrontation took place between Lebanese resistance fighters and a Zionist force in western al-Biqa' today. Reports from the area said that an Israeli commando force advanced for 13 km toward al-Nabi Safa and Zummarayya under concentrated 155- and 120-mm shellfire. Israeli helicopters flew over the scene of operation.

The invading force engaged in fierce fighting for 2 hours with Lebanese resistance groups near the al-Nabi Safa area. REUTER reported that Israeli helicopters fired eight rockets at Libbaya and added that the Israeli bombardment was targeted against two checkpoints manned by troops of the Lebanese Army's 1st brigade located at the entrance to Libbaya. REUTER cited security sources as saying that seven resistance fighters were martyred and that the invading force demolished a number of houses.

Israeli Force Withdraws

NC2612072889 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Text] According to reports from Hasbayya, a Zionist commando force advanded toward the al-Nabi Safa area north of Zummarayya at 0230 today. The operation was targeted against positions of the Islamic resistance and the Lebanese Communist Party. Violent clashes took place, the results of which are not yet known. The attacking force withdrew at 0500 under cover of heavy artillery fire. Helicopters flew overhead during the operation.

'Awn Compares Situation to That of Romanian Army

NC2312103189 (Clandestine) The Lebanese Radio in Arabic 0600 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Commenting on the situation in Romania, Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn said that the Romanian Army's solidarity and support to the people is similar to what is taking place in Lebanon.

'Awn told Radio France that this phenomenon occurred before in the Philippines when the army sided with the people and turned against the despot.

Asked about his wishes for the French people at Christmas, 'Awn said: I wish them the best and ask them to remember that they have friends in Lebanon who are suffering and who expect their moral support and solidarity.

'Awn was told: You are internationally isolated and this makes military intervention necessary. He responded by saying: I do not think so, because the people's unity is a sufficient safeguard of their rights.

'Awn expressed his belief that the while French Government endorses the Arab solution and recognizes Dr Salim al-Huss' government, the French people support him ['Awn].

Sa'adah Discloses French Proposal for Settlement

NC2412085889 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0815 24 Dec 89

[Text] Phalangist Party leader Dr George Sa'adah has stated: We do not want the al-Ta'if agreement to fail or for ourselves to be the cause for its failure. At the same time, we do not want the al-Ta'if agreement to turn from one of accord and peace into an agreement of war or to adopt decisions that are bound to obstruct the conciliatory atmosphere which we provided in al-Ta'if.

Sa'adah revealed a proposal which French envoy Gerard Bapt was instructed to convey to General 'Awn. The proposal provides for a solution that finds common ground among the positions of all parties and guarantees the establishment of the state's authority over all Lebanese territory.

Sa'adah said: The proposal provides for solidarity among ourselves and for us to enter the government together. It also states that we would ask the Council of Ministers to draw up a comprehensive plan that includes a timetable for a gradual withdrawal of the Syrian forces, beginning with areas that the Lebanese Council of Ministers would have the sole right to specify. The proposal also provides for the first phase of withdrawal to be carried out immediately.

Sa'adah added: In the event this timetable is not implemented, we would all withdraw from the government and declare that the al-Ta'if agreement has failed. In this case, we would not be responsible for its failure. It would be the responsibility of the party obstructing its implementation.

Sa'adah continued: I proposed to French Deputy Bapt to propose to Gen 'Awn that all of us should ask the Arab tripartite committee to offer an interpretation of the clauses which were misunderstood by some people or were maliciously misinterpreted by some others in their own way.

'Secret Report' on French Arms Supplies to 'Awn

NC2312074889 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Press reports yesterday said a secret report from Paris has been discovered that exposes Zionist moves to support Michel 'Awn and to supply him with French arms shipments via Chad, with the knowledge of the authorities in Paris. The report says that Laurent Fabius, a French Socialist Party figure who is Jewish, arranged the deal and

supervised its implementation. French Army stores were opened in order to supply 'Awn with weapons.

The report concludes by saying that, in order not to appear involved, the people in charge of the deal gave instructions that Hissein Habre, leader of the Chadian regime, should be used as a cover and that the shipments should appear as if they were being sent by France to Chad while in reality they would arrive in the port of Beirut delivery to 'Awn.

Official Denies Involvement in Romanian Events

JN2412072889 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0710 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Damascus, 24 Dec (SANA)—An official source has stated that what is happening in Romania is an internal issue in which Syria cannot interfere. Syria is very concerned about continuing relations of friendship between the Syrian and Romanian peoples.

Alleged reports that Syria is interfering in the internal fighting in Romania only aim at ruining Syrian-Romanian relations and damaging the trust between Syria and the friendly Soviet Union and all the other countries in the socialist camp.

Reportage on Visit of Iran's 'Ali Besharati

Meets Al-Shar' 24 Dec

JN2412151489 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1425 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Damascus, 24 Dec (SANA)—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' this afternoon received Mohammad 'Ali Besharati, first deputy to the Iranian foreign minister. The meeting was attended by Dia'allah al- Fattal, assistant foreign minister, and Akhtari Mohammad Hasan, the Iranian ambassador to Syria.

They discussed bilateral relations and developments in the region. They also emphasized the need to abide by the Damascus agreement signed between the Amal Movement and Hizballah and to end the fighting between the two in Lebanon.

IRNA on Al-Shar' Meeting

LD2412184689 Tehran IRNA in English 1617 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Damascus, Dec. 24, IRNA—Iran's First Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Mohammad Besharati discussed latest regional developments with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' here today.

The two sides also stressed full implementation of the content of the agreement between Amal and Hezbollah groups in Lebanon to end their clashes.

Meets Al-Asad

JN2512133089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received Mohammad 'Ali Besharati, Iran's first deputy foreign minister, and his delegation at 1230 today. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Iranian Ambassador in Damascus Hasan Akhtari. Besharati conveyed to the president a message from Iranian President Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani. Discussions revolved around bilateral relations and the situation in the region.

Conveys Message to Al-Asad

LD2512170989 Tehran IRNA in English 1455 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Damascus, Dec. 25, IRNA—Visiting Iranian First Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati today presented President Hafiz al-Asad a message from his Iranian counterpart, Hojjat Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

President al-Asad and Besharati also discussed bilateral ties and regional issues.

The Iranian official arrived here on December 23.

Vice President Khaddam Departs for Cairo 23 Dec

JN2312090989 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0849 GMT 23 Dec 89

[TExt] Damascus, 23 Dec (SANA)—Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam left Damascus for Cairo this morning as President Hafiz al-Asad's special envoy, carrying a message to President Husni Mubarak within the framework of the continuous contacts between the two presidents to promote Syrian-Egyptian relations in the interest of the Arab nation.

Spokesman Rules Out Mubarak Visit to Damascus

JN2512132689 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1220 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Damascus—Presidential Palace press spokesman Jubran Kuriyah has ruled out a visit to Damascus tomorrow by President Husni Mubarak. He said: I do not think this visit will take place tomorrow.

He was responding to a report by the Lebanese newspaper AL-SAFIR that the Egyptian president will visit Damascus tomorrow.

Al-Asad To Hold 'Very Important' Talks in Moscow

JN2212182689 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 20 Dec 89 p 1

[Text] AL-ITTIHAD has learned that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad will officially visit the Soviet Union early next year. Moscow informed Damascus that it is ready to receive President al-Asad anytime he deems suitable during the next 2 months. Soviet and Arab diplomatic sources described President al-Asad's visit to Moscow and the discussions he will hold with the Soviet leadership as very important on the level of bilateral relations, especially on the level of economic and military cooperation and a peaceful solution to the Middle East crisis.

These sources added that discussions during the visit will deal with Soviet arms deals for the Syrian Army and means of payment for these weapons. In addition, an economic cooperation protocol will be signed in a framework befitting internal changes in the Soviet Union. During the past few weeks, visits were exchanged between officials from the two countries to prepare an agenda for the visit.

Afghanistan

End to U.S. 'Aggression' in Panama Demanded

LD2212214689 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0500 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Kabul, Dec. 21, BAKHTAR—The USA armed aggression on Panama is a violation on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of an independent country which is a member of the UNO [United Naitons Organization] and the Non-Aligned Movement, said a spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan (RA) today.

This USA action which in itself runs counter to the UNO Charter and international norms has been condemned by the Afghan people, the spokesman adds.

At the first hours of the USA air bombardment, artillery, tank and heavy armaments fires a large number of civilians lost their lives, the spokesman emphasizes.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the RA demands unconditional and immediate cessation of the USA armed aggression against Panama.

Jordanian Sentenced to 20 Years for Spying

BK2412103689 Hong Kong AFP in English 1032 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Kabul, Dec 24 (AFP)—An Afghan military court has sentenced a Jordanian to 20 years of hard labor on charges of espionage and waging war against the state, an official spokesman said here Sunday [24 December]. The special national security court last week sentenced Muhammad Woyel [name as received] to 20 years in jail, but said the convict could appeal against the ruling in a higher Afghan court.

The spokesman said the Jordanian entered eastern Nangahar Province from neighbouring Pakistan to conduct military and espionage activities, and said Mr. Woyel was arrested after being wounded in a skirmish July 14. The Jordanian had fought alongside Afghan mujahidin resistance fighters battling to overthrow the Soviet-backed government of President Najibullah.

The spokesman said security forces had seized several documents from Mr. Woyel which linked him to the Jordanian secret service.

The Afghan Government earlier this year sentenced two Saudis and an Iranian on similar charges to between 17 and 19 years imprisonment.

Islamabad Radio Notes Heavy Fighting in Provinces

BK2412133689 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1300 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan speak of heavy fighting between the mujahidin and Kabul regime troops from various parts of the country. The Afghan interim government news agency MIDIA [MEDIA INFORMATION DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC AFGHANISTAN] says mujahidin destroyed a jet fighter in an attack in Bagram air base. In another attack, mujahidin killed 52 officers in Khowst and Ghurian Districts of Paktia and Herat Provinces. In Badakhshan Province, the Kabul regime jet fighters bombed the local bazaar, where mujahidin were distributing wheat among the drought-hit people. Four people were killed on the spot and fourteen injured in the indiscriminate bombings.

'Fierce Fighting' Continues

BK2512151489 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1400 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] In Afghanistan, fierce fighting continues between the mujahidin and the Kabul regime forces in various parts of the country. The Afghan interim government news agency MIDIA [MEDIA INFORMATION DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC AFGHANISTAN] reports that in a recent operation the mujahidin attacked the military positions of Dar-ol Aman, the headquarters of 7th Division, and also the Kabul airport. According to reports, the Kabul airport was closed last Monday due to attacks on it and the flights were canceled for several hours. Another report says during a clash, mujahidin killed four members of the Kabul regime's security forces at (Arhana) junction in Kabul.

Bangladesh

Ershad Reshuffles Cabinet; 4 Ministers Dropped

BK2412100089 Hong Kong AFP in English 0916 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Dhaka, Dec 24 (AFP)—Bangladesh President Hussain Mohammad Ershad on Sunday [24 December] dropped four ministers from his 41-member Council of Ministers and changed the jobs of five others, the official BSS [BANGLADESH SANGBAD SANGSTHA] news agency reported.

BSS said the president "relieved with immediate effect" textile minister and one-time powerful Dhaka Mayor Abdul Malik, Forest and Environment Minister Mayeedul Islam, Food Minister Iqbal Hussain Chowdhury and State Minister for Industries Noor Mohammad Khan.

Sources close to the presidential palace said their replacements could be inducted later Sunday. The president would give the food portfolio to Deputy Prime Minister Shah Moazzam Hussain, BSS said. The forest and environment post would go to to Cultural Affairs Minister Zafar Imam, labour and manpower to Relief and Rehabilitation Minister Sirajul Hussain Khan and the Textile Ministry to Youth and Sports Minister Ruhul Amin Howlader.

The deputy prime minister, who is also secretary-general of the ruling Jatiya Party, earlier held the labour and manpower portfolio.

Mr. Imam, who is also assistant secretary general of the party, was relieved as textile minister about two months ago after a minor reshuffle. He would be replaced in the Culture Ministry by State Minister for Information Syed Deedar Bakth.

Tajul Islam Chowdhury, until recently minister of agriculture, would move on to the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

The posts of relief and rehabilitation minister, state minister for industries and state minister for information were yet to be filled.

General Ershad, 59, who seized power in a 1982 bloodless coup, in his last major cabinet reshuffle on August 12 elevated Prime Minister Moudud Ahmed to the vice presidency and replaced him with Deputy Prime Minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed.

New Portfolios Listed

BK2412160889 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] President Ershad today appointed (Mamdudul Rahman Chowdhury) and Nazimuddin Al Azad ministers and Syed Mohammad Qaiser state minister. The president administered the oath of office to the newly-appointed ministers and state minister at a simple ceremony at Banga Bhavan [President's House] this evening.

Mr (Mamdudul Rahman Chowdhury) has been given the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation and Mr Nazimuddin Al Azad, the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Syed Mohammad Qaiser, who was whip of Jatiya Sangsad [Parliament] is now the state minister for agriculture.

President Ershad also relieved three ministers and one state minister of their posts from the cabinet. They are:
Forest and Environment Minister Mayeedul Islam;
Textile Minister M.A. Malik;
Food Minister Iqbal Hussain Chowdhury; and
State Minister for Industries Noor Mohammad Khan.

The president also reallocated the portfolios of some of the ministers. They are:
Shah Moazzam Hussain—food in place of labor and manpower;
Mr Shirajul Hussain—labor and manpower in place of relief;
Mr Zafar Imam—forest and environment in place of culture; and
Mr Ruhul Amin Howlader—textiles in place of sports and youth.

Mr Tajul Islam Chowdhury has been made state minister in charge of youth and sports, and Syed Deedar Bakth, state minister in charge of culture.

India

Vorontsov Delivers Gorbachev's Letter to Singh

BK2212155689 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] A new impetus is to be given by the Soviet Union in all fields of its cooperation with India. This was stated in a letter by the Soviet leader, Mr Gorbachev, to the prime minister, Mr Vishwanath Pratap Singh. The letter was delivered personally by the special Soviet envoy, Mr Yuliy Vorontsov, to the prime minister in New Delhi today. A two-member delegation headed by Mr Vorontsov also had extensive meetings with the Indian leaders, including the prime minister.

The central thrust of the discussions were the desire expressed by the Soviet leadership that relations with India should not only converge on their traditional level of friendship, but should be strengthened.

Singh: Bofors Debarred From Future Contracts

BK2612090889 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Text] The prime minister, Mr Vishwanath Pratap Singh, today announced in the Rajya Sabha the government's decision to debar the Swedish arms firm Bofors from entering into any defense weapons contracts with India for future supply of weapons. Mr Singh, who also holds the defense portfolio, said during question hour that the firm will be debarred till the supply of the names of the recipients of the commission paid in the 115-mm howitzer gun deal and also accede to the government's request to return the commission money paid in the deal.

Replying to supplementaries, the prime minister said the government is determined to the find the truth, and there will be no compromise or delaying on this issue. Investigations have already been initiated to find out the names of the recipients of the kickbacks, and this will be pursued. Mr Singh said the Swiss authorities had been requested on the 12th of this month to furnish certain information early. Other possible steps are also been considered, he added.

The prime minister said he is ready to share further information on the issue with the members. When he referred to a note from from the former minister of state for defense, Mr Arun Singh, to the then prime minister, there were strong protests from the opposition Congress-I benches. Amid the din, the chair announced that the question hour is over. Several members from both the sides went on raising the issue through points of order. The chairman, Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma, ruled that the question hour cannot go on; the matter can be allowed to be raised in the house in some other form, if the members so desired. There was a demand for a ½ an hour discussion on the issue.

BJP Urges Government Not To Accept IMF Loans

BK2512144989 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] The Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] has urged the central government not to take International Monetary Fund [IMF] loans, as the country is already reeling under heavy foreign debt burden. Addressing a press conference in Calcutta today, the party general secretary, Mr Murli Manohar Joshi, said the government should avoid IMF loans because they have generally very humiliating conditions attached to them. Mr Joshi said pressures are being exerted on the new government to go in for the IMF loans. Some economists are also canvassing that there is no alternative to the loans. The government should do nothing to subjugate the country's economic independence, Mr Joshi added.

Naxalites Kidnap Andhra Pradesh Legislator

BK2412074889 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] In Andhra Pradesh, an all party meeting was held in Hyderabad this morning to take stock of the situation following the kidnapping of the Telgu Desam party [TDP] MLA [member of the legislative assembly]. Mr M. Venkateshwar Rao, by Naxalites [Maoist guerrillas]. The leaders who attended the meeting were from the Congress-I, BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party], the Janata Dal, and the CPI [Communist Party of India]. Later, in an informal chat with newsmen, the leaders condemned the kidnapping of the legislator. They urged the government to take all possible steps to secure the release of Mr Venkateshwar Rao. The state chief minister, Mr M. Chenna Reddy, had an informal meeting with his cabinet colleagues after the all party meeting.

Mr Venkateshwar Rao along with three others was kidnapped by Naxalites near (Ramaduggu) village near Nizamabad District yesterday. Our correspondent reports that they were taken away by an armed group of members belonging to the People's War group into the nearby forest and demanded the release of six of their colleagues from the Warangal jail. They set the deadline to meet their demand by this evening. Our correspondent adds that the Naxalites have already released the three people who were taken away along with Mr Venkateshwar Rao. Senior police officials are camping at the site of the incident.

Prime Minister Comments

BK2512125489 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] The whereabouts of the kidnapped Telugu Desam MLA [member of the legislative assembly, Mr Venkateshwar Rao, are still not known even 24 hours after the expiry of deadline set by the Naxalites [Maoist guerrillas] for the release of six of their colleagues.

The prime minister, Mr Vishwanath Pratap Singh, spoke to the Andhra Pradesh chief minister, Dr Chenna Reddy, this morning and inquired about the safety of the legislator who was kidnapped on Saturday. The prime minister expressed the hope that the state government will take all necessary steps to secure the release of the kidnapped MLA.

The state cabinet again met in Hyderabad this morning and took stock of the situation. The Nizamabad District from where the MLA was abducted observed a total bundh [strike] today in response to a call given by the Telugu Desam. The Telugu Desam president, Mr N.T. Rama Rao, and 16 members of Parliament from Andhra Pradesh have appealed to the state government to take immediate steps for the release of the legislator. Speaking to newsmen in Hyderabad today, Mr Rama Rao said he suggested in yesterday's all-party meeting that the government should conceded, if necessary, the Naxalites' demand. In a statement, 16 members of parliament also appealed to the Naxalites to release Mr Venkateshwar Rao.

Kidnappers Make Fresh Demand

BK2612031989 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Text] In Andhra Pradesh, the Naxalites [Maoist guerrillas] who are holding the Teulgu Desam legislator, Mr M. Venkateshwar Rao, have put up a fresh demand for his release. The deadline earlier laid down by them ended yesterday evening. A courier from the Naxalites took the journalists to the interior forest area in the Nizamabad District and held a press conference where the Naxalites belonging to the People's War group said that Mr Venkateshwar Rao is safe. They demanded the release of six more of their colleagues who were arrested by the police earlier; however, it did not give any time limit. The journalists conveyed the demand of the Naxalites to the district officials last night.

Meanwhile, the hunger strike by the wife of the abducted MLA [member of the Legislative Assembly] entered the 3d day today. She is demanding quick action by the state government for the release of her husband. A hartal [strike] was observed in Nizamabad town in protest against the kidnapping.

Violence Continues in Kashmir; Curfew Reimposed

BK2212124289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, curfew in Sopur town has been reimposed after violent mobs indulged in heavy stone pelting in (Haticha) area of Sopur town today. Police had to resort to firing to disperse the violent mob in which one person was injured.

In Srinagar, curfew was relaxed today from 0800 to 1530 hours, while no relaxation was given in Anantnag and Shupiyan town. Day curfew has already been lifted from Braamula town.

'Cross Firing' in Srinagar 25 Dec

BK2512162689 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, one constable was seriously injured in an encounter in a downtown locality of Srinagar city today. There are also reports of cross firing incidents in some other areas of the city. Curfew has been reimposed in Srinagar from 1700 [1130 GMT] this evening.

The death toll in yesterday's cross firing in Batamalu has risen to two, with the death of one more person in the hospital. Sixteen people, including a deputy superintendent of police of the CRPF [Central Reserve Police Force], were injured in the incident.

Iran

Emami-Kashani Denounces U.S. Panama Operation

NC2212160789 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1120 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Arabic Friday prayers sermon delivered by Ayatollah Emami-Kashani at Tehran University on 22 December—recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Peace be upon the Muslim brothers and sisters all over the world. Whenever Muslims go through an experience, the value and importance of Muslim thought becomes more enhanced than before. Almighty God said: Ye who believe, take not into your intimacy those outside your ranks: They will not fail to corrupt you." [Koranic verse]

The arrogant ones are always trying to weaken the people, particularly Muslims. We see Lebanon, this oppressed country, today being subjected to a dirty plot. Arrogance wants to plan a black fate for it and to have the hands of their agents and followers tear it apart. Therefore, the faithful Muslims in Lebanon must maintain unity before it is too late. Your unity, O brothers, will shackle the demons and enemies. "Feeble indeed is the cunning of Satan." [Koranic verse] If you persist with your differences, this will lead to division, and then you will not be able to resist the enemies and prevent the danger of your country's partition by the isolationists. Listen to the call of the great prophet when he says: Four are better than three, and three are better than two, and two are better than one, and God supports the group.

Muslims in Lebanon and Palestine must unite and block any attempt to divert their minds and attention from fighting the entity who usurped Palestine. Do not give time to the enemy because arrogance wants you as tools for its ambitions. It will not shy away from committing any crime.

Today you are witnessing the attack of the American military forces against Panama. This is taking place without any legitimate justification. The United States will not hesitate to attack any nonaligned state and to violate all international laws. What is strange is that at the same time it is claiming with total insolence that it is an example for others and that it wants to impose its sovereignty over all other areas. We strongly denounce this barbaric attack and draw the attention of everyone to the plots of world arrogance.

Muslim brothers and sisters, I admonish you to (?follow) Islam in all fields and to abide by the sublime heavenly values. I admonish you to fear God and to keep away from what God has forbidden. The best thing for an individual is godliness.

Take refuge in Almighty God against the evils of Satan. In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. "Say he is God, the one and only; God the eternal, absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him." "Or, who listens to the soul distressed when it calls on Him, and who relieves its suffering." [Koranic verses]

Reaction to U.S 'Invasion' of Panama Continues

Majles Speaker Condemns Move

LD2412114689 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] During today's open session of the Majles, chaired by Speaker Karrubi, he condemned the U.S. military violation of Panama and praised the Panamanian nation's resistance and steadfastness in the face of such manifest violation of law. Pointing to the effects of such manifest violations on the part of the United States against defenseless countries in the world, the Majles speaker said: Such actions will certainly deepen the resistance of nations, and the United States will not achieve its evil aims. The only means of resisting the U.S. aggressions throughout the world is through readiness and resistance of nations.

Continuing his remarks, the Majles speaker said: The United States which claims to support freedom, peace, human rights, and the fight against terrorism, has, by this action, trampled upon all international regulations, revealing its true identity to the world.

Concluding his remarks, Mr Karrubi referred to U.S. violations regarding Grenada, Libya, Lebanon, and the Persian Gulf, and said: Aggression is the true nature of the United States. The invasion of Panama is certainly not the first U.S. conspiracy and will not be the last conspiracy waged by that country.

During the session, a petition signed by over 170 Majles deputies on the U.S. violation of Panama was read out. The petition calls on the parliaments of all independent countries in the world to join the Majles in voicing their condemnation of such a move. In addition, another group of Majles deputies wrote a letter calling on all people to gather in front of the Majles to voice their abhorrence of the U.S. military invasion of Panama. According to this letter, the

popular gathering in front of the Majles is to take place at 1500 on Tuesday 26 December.

Karrubi Regrets Vatican Endorsement

LD2512112289 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] During today's open Majles session, the speaker, Mr Karrubi, announced his greetings to the oppressed, monotheists, and Christians of the world, especially our Christian compatriots, and voiced the hope that following the revitalized teachings of that great prophet, the world's Christians will serve the world and establish the peace which his eminence sought.

The Majles speaker said that although Jesus Christ brought peace and calm to the world and fought oppression, on the eve of the anniversary of his birth, the people of Panama were attacked and U.S. forces killed civilians in that small country as a gift.

He added: It is even more regrettable that the Vatican has endorsed America's aggression. That is disgraceful. It contradicts Christ's decrees.

He then referred to the message sent in 1979-80 by his eminence the imam [Khomeyni] to the pope, in connection with the hostages and read out parts of it. He said: I hope the imam's advice serves as a warning to the world oppressors and awakens the Christian clergy.

Finally, he called on the people to take part in tomorrow's ceremonies in front of the Majles in protest against America's military aggression against Panama.

Anti-U.S. 'Ceremonies' Planned

LD2512113989 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] According to the Central News Unit, the Islamic Propaganda Coordination Council issued a statement condemning the U.S. military invasion of Panama, which is a violation of the rights of nations and an encroachment of the territorial integrity of countries. It invites the entire courageous nation of Iran to declare its protest and revulsion over that savage action by holding special ceremonies throughout the country.

On the basis of the report, the Islamic Propaganda Coordination Council also has invited the people of Tehran to attend the ceremonies which will be held for that purpose at 1500 tomorrow [1130 GMT 26 December] in front of the Majles.

Tehran Residents Urged To Attend

LD2512181189 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] In connection with demonstrations protesting at the U.S. military aggression against Panama, Mr Bayat, deputy speaker of the Majles, in an exclusive interview today with our reporter said:

[Begin Bayat recording] The Majles and the dear deputies, who are the manifestation of the heroism and excellence of our brave nation, in a decisive majority vote once again condemned U.S. aggression and voiced their anger, their contempt, abhorrence, and eternal curses on the United States and its supporters. The deputies denounced every kind of aggression and the aggressors who intend to attack the lives, possessions, and resources of oppressed nations throughout the world and have called on our heroic and resistant nation and dear inhabitants of Tehran to participate tomorrow afternoon, God willing, in the march and zealously display their wrath with their crushing and strong slogan "Death to America." God willing, they will respond to this invitation and pay allegiance once again to the lofty spirit of their gracious imam [Khomeyni]. We hope our people will zealously take part in this epic and angry movement.

KEYHAN Denounces Invasion, Bush

LD2312183189 Tehran IRNA in English 1635 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 23, IRNA—George Bush has invaded Panama at the cost of direputing himself and the American Government before the very people of the U.S., said the Persian daily KEYHAN today. "And because of having endorsed the invasion, the U.S. President should be tried at a tribunal of international conscience," it added.

It said Washington's count-down for invading Panama reached zero, when 13,000 U.S. commandoes invaded the small country last Wednesday, and termed the U.S. aggression "the law of the jungle, the law that upholds only the powermongers." The invasion designed to oust General Noriega, "the powerful personage in small Panama," continued the daily, "openly trampled upon an earlier treaty between Washington and Panama whereby the Americans should leave the Panama Canal."

However, contrary to the expectations of the Yankees, their aggression met with popular resistance in Panama, many of whose civilians including women and children have been killed by the American invaders, it said. The daily pointed that the invasion of Panama was simply another action in a series of efforts by Washington over the past two years for disarming General Noriega, which has brought only infamy for the United States.

"The public conscience of the world has been badly injured for the unabashed acts of the U.S. servicemen in Panama. The U.S. has invaded an independent country, a member of the United Nations, killing many of Panamanian people and betraying its own lack of respect for all principles and its inhesitation to satisfy its own greed even though it may involve trampling on a document of which the U.S. itself is a signatory," deplored KEYHAN.

Irrespective of whether or not Gen. Noriega is to be captured by the Americans, said the daily, "the end result of the invasion is utter defeat for the U.S., a defeat because it has laid bare the falsehood of the American

bran
terro of 'human rights', and because it has exposed the
The rist nature of the administration in Washington."
dese U.S. which practices state terrorism would well
cons ve to be tried at a forum of the international
havi cience and made to pay the heavy damages for
"Th g invaded Panama.
is di least expenses already of that invasion to the U.S.
eyes reputation of George Bush and his agents before the
of the fellow Americans," concluded KEYHAN.

NC2 Commentary Condemns U.S. Operation

0430 12132789 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian GMT 25 Dec 89

[Unt itled Central News Unit Research Group commentary]
[Exc
agai erpts] In the name of God. The U.S. military attack
cont st the small country of Panama has generated much
the roversy in political circles these days and has been
this reason for a wider review of the military policy of
superpower in different parts of the world.
Ther
Gov e is no doubt that, as is the nature of the U.S.
disp ernment, this superpower feels obliged to stage a
peo lay of its belligerence from time to time against the
capi le of the world and to appropriate immense political
utte al by doing so. However, the issue which has elicited
tion amazement from the optimistic Westernized fac-
aggr of the world is that in present conditions, such
bee essive acts by the United States have very rarely
predicted.
All
and Western media seemed replete with remarks of peace
mili friendship and news of an end to tension and
capa ary aggression for all. After Reagan, Bush, in his
all city as President, made promises to establish peace
role ver the world. In every speech he stressed the U.S.
resu in creating new circumstances for this purpose. As a
realilt of such false claims, George Bush was labeled
one istic and moderate in the Western media's lexicon. If
past decided to be a little optimistic and ignored the U.S.
that record of aggression, he would easily have believed
of t the U.S. President's remarks had at least some ring
ruth. [passage omitted]
How
and ever, contrary to the views of the simple-minded
inal unaware people, the world witnessed another crim-
past act of U.S. military aggression. This time, as in the
foot , another Third World country was trampled under-
bare by the U.S. forces, a small country populated by
extre ly 3 million, with limited armed forces, but with an
effo emely important strategic position. After months of
Pan rts on its part to prevent any confrontation or clash,
[pa ama became the venue for the latest U.S. crime.
sage omitted]
Wit
Stat h callous indifference to all opposition, the United
Cou es resorted to its right of veto in the UN Security
sion ncil and announced that this miltiary act of aggres-
pret was in conformity with the UN Charter. This
text has been repeatedly used by the United States since it embarked on strengthening its power in the world, especially in the past 40 years. Therefore, other aggressive powers have also used such justification to crush deprived countries.

If we turn the pages of contemporary history, we will not be able to find a single decade unmarked by repeated military aggression by the United States. Not a single area has not been the victim of this superpower's bloodthirsty plans All areas from Indochina to the Middle East and from Europe to Central America bear the mark of past U.S. military aggression. It is interesting that in not one of these regions has such genocide taken place without an ostensibly humanitarian pretext. It has always been accompanied by extensive and insidious propaganda to cover the belligerence. When U.S. forces were involved in massacre and genocide in Vietnam, or when the trained forces of this superpower in the Middle East or in Central America were making the risen oppressed their targets, in Washington the call for peace and tranquillity was resonating and clamoring louder than ever. One after another, the U.S. Presidents smilingly appeared before correspondents and media representatives and spoke of their heartfelt desire to establish real peace and friendship. In this scenario, the most insane were those who optimistically launched an assessment of the situation and, in unison with the international propaganda of the world oppression, conveyed news of the approach of spring and the departure forever of the winter. These deceitful words would barely subside when the cry of the oppression of another tyrannized nation regarding another act of military aggression would rise again in the air.

Reaction, Commentary on Romanian Situation

Velayati on Ceausescu Visit

LD2412151789 Tehran IRNA in English 1352 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 24, IRNA—The Islamic Republic of Iran today voiced support for the Romanian people's wish for establishment of a democratic system of government in that country. Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati told a gathering of students at Tehran University today that during the recent visit to Tehran of the deposed Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu, Iranian leaders had repeatedly called on him to bow to his people's demands.

He made it clear that Ceausescu's visit to Tehran was made after his frequent requests and because the date of the trip had already been determined and no specific events had happened upto then in Romania. 'The visit was made according to international diplomatic norms,' he said.

The foreign minister once again pledged Iran's support for the Romanian people's efforts to reform the political system of their country and said 'what is important and acceptable to Iran is the wish of the Romanian people.'

National Salvation Front Recognized

LD2612111989 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Text] Our country's Foreign Ministry issued a statement recognizing the Romanian National Salvation Front [NSF] as the new ruling body in that country. According to a Central News Unit report, the statement says: The Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in line with the country's foreign policy principles, has always admired popular struggles movements all over the world and has supported the freedom-seeking aspirations of nations. On this basis, and as the Islamic Republic's solidarity with the wishes of the Romanian people has been stated before, the Islamic Republic of Iran officially recognizes the NSF of Romania as the new ruling body in that country and once again declares the support of the nation and the government for the aspirations of the Romanian people. The Foreign Ministry is certain the two nations' ties will remain, and after the establishment of a popular government in Romania, relations will expand.

According to a Central News Unit report, the Information and Press Department of the Foreign Ministry also informed Romania's ambassador of the readiness of the Iranian Red Crescent Society to send medical aid to that country's people.

Report on Nationals Fighting Denied

LD2512185289 Tehran IRNA in English 1657 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 25, IRNA—The Islamic Republic on Monday categorically denied that some Iranian nationals were serving in the deposed Romanian leader's police force.

The BBC World Service recently alleged, quoting a Romanian Army spokesman as saying that many of those arrested in the recent clashes in Romania were Iranian or Libyan nationals, who it claimed constituted part of Nicolae Ceausescu's police.

An informed source at the Foreign Ministry today said 'circulation of such allegations was in line with the imperialist mass media's plots to mar relations between the Iranian and Romanian peoples.' The source, stressing that the Islamic Republic has explicitly announced her solidarity with the Romanian people, condemned those fanning such baseless rumours.

ETTELA'AT Demands 'Explanation'

LD2312163189 Tehran IRNA in English 1540 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 23, IRNA—Romania's Nicolae Ceausescu was a 'dictator' who had suppressed the people of his country and imposed his own kith and kin upon an entire nation, said the Persian daily ETTELA'AT today and demanded an explanation from Iran's Foreign Ministry for his recent visit.

'With respect to what has befallen the Romanian president the Iranian Foreign Ministry would do well to offer some explanation why it arranged for Ceausescu to visit Tehran at an inopportune time when his ouster from power was not something difficult to guess,' said the daily in view of the reforms sweeping Eastern Europe.

Nicolae Ceausescu arrived in Tehran on Monday December 18, he left for Bucharest on Wednesday December 20 and was ousted from presidency on Friday December 22.

'No doubt 'coincidence' has always been an actual happening, but our foreign policy bureaus as well as our embassies should have taken notice of some important topics before arranging Ceausescu's visit to Tehran,' said ETTELA'AT.

Referring to the 'swift current of developments in Eastern Europe' which diminishes the stature of Ceausescu to that of a 'falling star' it pointed out the violent suppression of people's demonstrations in Timisoara (western Romania) on the eve of the Ceausescu's visit to Tehran which left hundreds killed, 'including one Iranian student.'

Ceausescu's political record at home as a dictator who had imposed his own kith and kin on the Romanians, and who in the international scene acted as a communication bridge between Israel and the Arab countries, was another fact that should have been taken note of, it said.

And last but not the least, said ETTELA'AT, was the direction of international propaganda and news service of the international news agencies and their efforts for defaming the Islamic Iran.

'Let us hope that Ceausescu was the last falling star who came to the Islamic Republic for his last meal. Let us respect the will of the people of Romania... the inopportune visit to Tehran by Ceausescu may be made good by saluting the struggle of the Romania people,' it concluded.

TEHRAN TIMES 'Volte-Face' Noted

LD2312211789 Tehran IRNA in English 1920 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 23, IRNA—"The Iranian nation welcomes the decision of the Romanian people and their movement for democracy," says the English daily TEHRAN TIMES in its editorial to appear tomorrow.

The paper had gone out of its way to welcome toppled President Nicolae Ceausescu during his visit to Tehran earlier this week, and what now seems to be a volte-face, it criticizes the Foreign Ministry for arranging the ill-timed visit, and urges that amends be made.

"Iranian foreign policy makers should make every possible effort to inform the Romanian people of the true sentiments and sympathy of our people and government," it says.

The daily admits that "Ceausescu's system had failed in providing democratic and legal platforms to its people to come in the open with their ideas and criticism."

Taking a cue from the Persian daily ETTELA'AT which Saturday sharply rapped Foreign Ministry officials for Ceausescu's visit when winds of change were blowing across Eastern Europe, TEHRAN TIMES questions the wisdom of not delaying the invitation although "it dates a year ago."

"But a thorny question should be hurled at the Iranian Foreign Ministry in view of the unravelling events in Romania. The nagging question is why should he (Ceausescu) be received at our capital while a whole nation has risen up to his rule?"

Nicolae Ceausescu was in Iran on December 18, he left for Bucharest on December 20, and was overthrown by the National Salvation Front on December 22.

The daily tried to lay the blame at the door of the Iranian ambassador in Bucharest, and said it was his duty of supplying the government with a "truthful and realistic assessment of the situation" in Romania.

"If a true account of the socio-political situation in Romania had been presented to the Iranian policy makers they would have most certainly called off the invitation at this very sensitive juncture."

However, it hails the move of the Iranian leader Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i who withdrew his scheduled meeting with Ceausescu last week, and said "this is in itself indicative of Iran's emphasis on certain principles and the popularity of the visiting heads of state."

"Yet the occurence of the official visit in this very sensitive time could harm the future of the two nations' relations."

"How can the Iranian nation which made one of the most vigorous revolutions against an armed-to-the-teeth dictator not share the sentiment of the Romanian people standing up to an autocratic rule. The Romanian nation's victory is a triumph of all nations," concludes TEHRAN TIMES.

Daily Says Visit 'Mistake'

LD2412100189 Tehran IRNA in English 0810 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 24, IRNA—The Persian daily JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI Sunday said that the Iranian Foreign Ministry made a mistake in hosting Nicolae Ceausescu at a time when pillars of his regime was collapsing.

In an inside page commentary the paper deploring the move said, "this is not the first time that irresponsibility and lack of awareness of our policy-makers cause problems incompatible with the reputation of a revolutionary country."

"Evidently, the latest error is not going to be the last, if the Foreign Ministry fails to make fundamental reconsiderations," added the commentary.

The paper also brought under question function of the Iranian diplomatic missions abroad. "What answer does the Foreign Ministry give to its failure to present a correct surveillance of situation in countries and status of governments?" asked the paper. It added that the Foreign Ministry through a proper evaluation could have prevented occurance of such incidents.

Stressing that the Islamic Republic of Iran is a revolutionary country enjoying support of its people, the paper said, "such a government must consolidate its ties with firmly-established states which are backed by popular support."

"Any effort contrary to this principle is in fact an endeavour to ignore the revolutionary, Islamic and popular nature of the Islamic Republic system," it said adding that such a failure is "unacceptable and may inflict irreparable blows on the prestige of this revolutionary system, if they are not properly reviewed."

KEYHAN Criticizes 'Erroneous' Visit

LD2512200189 Tehran IRNA in English 1846 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 25, IRNA—If the Iranian mass media had timely reacted to the visit to Tehran of deposed Romanian leader, the visit would have been postponed or most probably called off, said the Persian daily KEYHAN in a political commentary Monday.

"In that case," it continued, "We would have been spared the sight of seeing pictures of President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Nicolae Ceausescu standing together, which were carried by the Western press alongside the news of the massacre of Romanian people."

At a time when the Western mass media was trying to play down the news of the U.S. invasion of Panama, Ceausescu's arrival in Tehran served to feed the West's propaganda machine against the Islamic Republic, it said.

"Western news agencies which have not spared, and will not spare, any efforts to tarnish the image of the Islamic revolution, and are always trying to fish in troubled waters, gratefully siezed this opportunity," the daily said.

KEYHAN said that to err is part of human nature, but the Ceausescu phenomenon showed that the bungling of the foreign policy- makers, was coupled with the lack of any active approach on the part of the press towards a visit which could entail unfavorable results.

Ceausescu's trip to Tehran was certainly an "erroneous and uncalculated" move, and it is necessary for the concerned officials to give explanations, the daily concluded.

Envoy to Romania 'Sacked'

NC2612065089 Paris AFP in English 0641 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Text] Tehran, Dec 26 (AFP)—Iran's ambassador to Romania, Mohammad Jamshid Gowhari, has been sacked for "lack of understanding" of the situation in

Romania prior to the overthrow of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, the TEHRAN TIMES reported Tuesday.

The report, which quoted an informed source here, said Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati had decided to remove the ambassador from his post after being criticized by members of the Iranian parliament for Mr Ceausescu's three-day visit to Tehran last week.

The English-language TEHRAN TIMES is considered close to the Iranian Foreign Ministry. Hojjat ol-Eslam Sadeq Khalkhali, a member of parliament from the holy city of Qom, was quoted in the report as saying that "the Iranian Republic, as a protector of the oppressed in the world, should not have received a bloody dictator on its soil." Mr. Khalkhali also criticized Mr Gowhari for showing poor comprehension of the situation in Romania in a report delivered to Mr. Velayati on the eve of Mr Ceausescu's visit to Tehran.

The visit took place as Romanian secret police massacred anti-government demonstrators in the western city of Timisoara.

Bank Denies Holding Ceausescu's Gold

LD2412164589 Tehran IRNA in English 1455 GMT 24 Dec 89

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 24, IRNA—A senior Iranian banking official today categorically denied a report saying that the deposed Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu had deposited gold or foreign exchange with Iranian banks.

Tahmas Mazaheri, the Central Bank's secretary-general, told IRNA that it seemed such allegations were being circulated to disturb the public opinion and mar 'the friendly relations between the Iranian and Romanian nations.'

The West German news agency, DPA, in a dispatch from the Swiss capital of Berne Sunday quoted 'a defector from the ex-president's security police' as claiming that Ceausescu had deposited gold with banks in Switzerland and Iran over the past few months.

Besharati Departs for Talks in Damascus

LD2312181889 Tehran IRNA in English 1612 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 23, IRNA—First Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati left for Damascus at the head of a delegation today, to settle the differences which recently erupted between Lebanon's Hezbollah and Amal groups. During his visit, Besharati will also review with Syrian officials the latest developments in Lebanon.

Yesterday, in his Friday prayer sermon in Tehran, Ayatollah Emami-Kashami lectured to the two Lebanese groups for their falling easy prey to exploiters intent on tearing apart both Amal and Hezbollah.

Government To Release 50 More Iraqi POW's

LD2512190589 Tehran IRNA in English 1727 GMT 25 Dec 89

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 25, IRNA—As a humanitarian gesture, the Islamic Republic has agreed to release unilaterally 50 more sick and disabled Iraqi prisoners of war including five Christians, it was announced here today. The decision was taken upon the request of the U.N. chief, despite the Iraqi regime's opposition to the proposal earlier made by the Islamic Republic for swapping all sick and disabled war prisoners held by the two sides.

Interviewed by IRNA today, the group of 50 marked out for release, expressed its gratitude to the Islamic Republic for its humanitarian decision and for having provided with medical services and other facilities during captivity.

The Christian POW's said that at in Iranian prison camps, they were totally free to go to church and perform their religious rituals.

The whole batch conceded that at contrary to Islamic Iran's goodwill, Ba'thist Iraq has always shown ill-intention, and were it not for Baghdad's hurdles in the way of U.N. Resolution 598, a real peace would have long been restored to the area. "For Baghdad, humanitarian issues hold no value, and the regime was persuing its own political ambitions," said one of the POW's.

To date, the Islamic POW's in 25 stages, out of whom 113 have sought asylum in Iran, a member of the committee in charge of Iraqi POW's told reporters. [sentence as received] He added that 49 non-Iraqi mercenaries from Lebanon, Sudan, Egypt and Somalia, captured by the Muslim combatants on the war fronts, have been freed, although international regulations consider them as mercenaries and not war prisoners.

In turn, the official continued, Baghdad has released only 949 disabled Iranian POW's including 456 border civilians kidnapped by Iraqi troops in blatant violation of international regulations.

He reiterated that Iran, because of its Islamic principles, would continue to release disabled Iraqi POW's unilaterally, on humanitarian grounds.

TEHRAN TIMES Details Majles Election Results

NC2412102389 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 17 Dec 89 pp 1, 5

[Text] Hojjat ol-Eslam Movahhedi-Kermani and former Interior Minister 'Ali AKbar Mohtashemi were declared winners in the Majles or parliament by-election from the Tehran constituency, it was announced by the Interior Ministry yesterday.

According to the announcement, a total of 661,487 votes were cast in Friday's by-election and the highest number of votes was snatched by Movahhedi-Kermani with 216,656 followed by Mohtashemi with 225,570 votes.

Former Commerce minister Asgar-Owladi with 216,656 votes and Mrs Mariyam Behruzi wth 219,921 votes, former Minister of Post, Telegraph and Telelphones Morteza Nabavi with 172,287 votes and former Labor Minister Abolqasem Sarhaddizadeh with 184,386 votes will face run- off elections.

Former Minister of Heavy Industries Behzad Nabavi received 92,461 votes, former minister of Education Seyyed Kazem Akrami received 81,744 votes and 'Ali-reza Mahjub received 53,505 votes.

In Karaj and Eshtard, (Tehran Province), 'Abbas 'Ali Zali former agriculture minister won the elections securing 45,401 votes out of a total 101,944. Nine candidates ran in the Karaj and Eshtehard by-elections.

Asadollah Razavi won the seat for Kerman constituency defeating two other contenders. Razavi secured 29,032 votes out of 59,508.

Mohammad Jamali is elected to fill the vacant seat in the Majles for Kashan (Esfahan province). He defeated four contestants receiving 48,516 votes out of 97,652.

'Ali Shahrokhi is elected from Kuhdasht va Chegini (Lorestan Province) by securing 37,792 votes out of 73,167 defeating two other contenders.

As for the Torkman-Kordkuy constituency, no candidate managed to secure the needed votes—one-third of the votes cast, therefore another by-election will be held in future.

Sri Lanka

Tamil Army Accuses UK, Colombo of Backing Rivals

BK2312105689 Hong Kong AFP in English 1029 GMT 23 Dec 89

[Text] Colombo, Dec 23 (AFP)—A pro-Indian Tamil militant group charged here Saturday [23 December] that Britain and Colombo were funding and arming a rival Tamil guerrilla group in Sri Lanka in a bid to destabilise neighbouring India.

A group called the Northeast Militia, popularly known here as the Tamil National Army (TNA), accused British military intelligence agents of providing arms to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the dominant Tamil guerrilla force.

The militia said in a statement from the northeastern port of Trincomalee that Colombo had allowed the LTTE to bring in arms and was also involved in printing counterfeit currency to finance the group.

"The British military has used this as a cover to supply the most sophisticated pieces of weaponry to the LTTE to strengthen its protracted attempt to destabilise India," the statement said. It did not give details or elaborate on how, when or where the Tigers had received arms.

The TNA is regarded as the paramilitary wing of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), which governs the Northeastern Provincial Council. The TNA is currently battling the Tigers for military supremacy.

The TNA's intelligence outfit, the People's Intelligence Division (PID), had reported that two individuals it named as "Pappa" and "K.P." were behind printing forged 500-rupee notes to finance the LTTE, the statement said. It said the two men had been working in connivance with a senior minister and an LTTE leader.

The government had earlier accused the EPRLF of circulating counterfeit currency notes in the northeast, where the minority Tamil community is concentrated, to purchase arms and wreck the country's economy.

Relations have been extremely strained between the pro-Indian EPRLF, which has been campaigning for a prolonged Indian military presence on the island, and Colombo, which has been pushing for a withdrawal of the Indian Army as soon as possible. Both sides have been trading allegations, with Colombo and the LTTE calling the TNA a proxy army of India.

There had been heavy fighting between TNA and LTTE cadres in areas recently vacated by Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) troops, particularly in the island's Eastern Province.

Foreign Minister Ranjan Wijeratne lashed out Thursday at the Indian bureacracy, accusing it of sabotaging an agreement to take back all Indian troops from the island Republic by the end of the year.

Officials said the Indian High Commissioner here, Lakhan Lal Mehrotra, had a 20-minute meeting Friday with President Ranasinghe Premadasa at which he delivered a message from Indian Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh. No details were disclosed.

Communique Issued on Security Forces Operations

BK2312094889 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0850 GMT 23 Dec 89

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 23 Dec (LANKAPUVATH)—Ten subversives were killed by security forces in separate operations, yesterday.

A government communique issued today states that on information given by arrested subversive suspects, security forces ambushed and killed six subversives at Kotaweheva in the North Western Province district of Kurunegala. The forces recovered repeater shotguns, double barrel shotguns, 12-bore shotguns, muzzle loading shotguns, galkattas [locally-made pistols] and cartridges. At Ambanpola, also in the North Western Province, security forces shot dead a subversive and recovered 12-bore shotguns, muzzle loading shotguns, sets of police uniforms, painting brushes and tins of paint.

The communique further states that a security forces patrol proceeding to reach a subversive hideout in Kandy in the Central Province was ambushed. The forces retaliated, killing three subversives. At Udagalkanda in the Central Province, security forces recovered from a subversive hideout, shotguns, rifles, 189 national identity cards, masks and army uniforms. In Matale and Nuwara Eliya, 29 suspected subversives were arrested by the security forces. They also recovered shotguns, galkattas, trap guns and cartridges.

A Sri Lankan Navy mobile patrol in Colombo arrested two suspects in a lorry loaded with contraband goods, including sarees, from India. The suspects have been handed over to the fort preventive office.

In the Uva Province district of Badulla, during an operation by security forces, an army deserter and another suspect were arrested.

Following the killings (reported yesterday) of four subversives at Brahmanagama, Puttalam, the security forces have also recovered seven 12-bore shotguns, three 16-bore shotguns, three galkattas, sticks of gelignite, JR [expansion unknown] hand grenades, 510 national identity cards, peak caps with Air Force badges.

In the Eastern Province district of Batticaloa, EPRLF [Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front] militants robbed a cooperative shop at Kannakuda and cash and jewellery from a residence at Ayatriyamalai.

Meanwhile, in the Southern Province district of Galle, unidentified persons shot and killed S. Wijesinghe, principal of Elpitiya Primary College and his son Sudath Wijesinghe at their residence. An unidentified gang also hacked to death a female, Piyaseela Rajapaksa, the communique states.

EPRLF Cadres Assault Catholic Church Leader

BK2312104089 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0940 GMT 23 Dec 89

["OANA/pool" item]

[Excerpt] Colombo, 23 Dec (LANKAPUVATH)—The head of the Catholic Church in Jaffna, Bishop Deogopillai is reported to have been assaulted by the EPRLF [Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front].

Reports reaching LANKAPUVATH from the northern peninsula states that two EPRLF cadres had entered the bishop's house in Cathedral Road, Jaffna, Thursday [21 December] and assaulted the elderly religious dignitary. [passage omitted]

Police Arrest Colombo District JVP Leader

BK2512091889 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0850 GMT 25 Dec 89

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 25 Dec (LANKAPUVATH)—The police made another significant breakthrough in their fight against subversion, when they arrested the chief JVP [Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna—People's Liberation Front] sector-2 leader of the Colombo District.

Police told LANKAPUVATH that the 23-year-old youth codenamed Nissanka was arrested at his operational headquarters in the Colombo suburb of Nugegoda by a police team led by headquarters Inspector Jayantha Kulatileke of the Mt Lavinia station. They said that Nissanka was a final year student at the Kelaniya University and an ex-Buddhist monk, who had given up his robes.

Investigations revealed that he was the leader of the JVP's principal sector-2 in the Colombo district in charge of operations at Homagama, Maharagama, Polhengoda, Piliyandala, Kohuwela, Dehiwela, Mt Lavinia, Ratmalana, Kottawa, Kahatuduwa, Moratuwa, and Wellawatte.

Police said that in his statement, Nissanka, the chief JVP sector-2 leader of Colombo District, had revealed details of operations, discussions with the central JVP leadership and divulged the names of persons allegedly engaged in subversive activities, including that of a film actress.

'Over 40' Killed in Tamil Group Clashes

BK2612032389 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 26 Dec 89

[Excerpt] Over 40 people were killed in clashes between rival Tamil groups in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka yesterday. According to agency reports, 44 bodies were found with gunshot wounds at Welikonda in the Polonnaruwa District. The victims were believed to be members of the Tamil National Army. [passage omitted]

500 Prisoners Freed To Mark Christmas Day

BK2512092889 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0902 GMT 25 Dec 89

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 25 Dec (LANKAPUVATH)—Five hundred prisoners were freed from Sri Lankan jails today in a special amnesty to mark Christmas Day. Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that those freed were convicts serving short sentences, mainly for failing to paying fines.

It was the largest number of prisoners ever released on a Christma Day in this majority Buddhist nation of 17 million people, the authorities said.